

Interpretations of Greek Mythology (Routledge Revivals)

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Edited by
Jan Bremmer



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Interpretations of Greek Mythology, first published in 1987, builds on the innovative work of Walter Burkert and the 'Paris school' of Jean-Pierre Vernant, and represents a renewal of interpretation of Greek mythology. The contributors to this volume present a variety of approaches to the Greek myths, all of which eschew a monolithic or exclusively structuralist hermeneutic method. Specifically, the notion that mythology can simply be read as a primitive mode of narrative history is rejected, with emphasis instead being placed on the relationships between mythology and history, ritual and political genealogy.

The essays concentrate on some of the best known characters and themes – Oedipus, Orpheus, Narcissus – reflecting the complexity and fascination of the Greek imagination. The volume will long remain an indispensable tool for the study of Greek mythology, and it is of great interest to anyone interested in the development of Greek culture and civilisation and the nature of myth.

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Abbreviations

- ABV** Beazley, *Attic Black-Figure Vase Painters* (Oxford, 1956)
- Ad** Burn and R. Glynn (eds), *Beazley Addenda. Additional References to ABV, ARV & Paralipomena* (Oxford, 1982)
- AJAr** *American Journal of Archaeology*
- ANEP** Pritchard, *The Ancient Near East in Pictures Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton, 1954 (Supplement 1968))
- ANET** Pritchard (ed.) *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, 3rd edn (Princeton, 1969)
- ARV** Beazley, *Attic Red-Figure Vase-Painters*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1963)
- BCH** *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique*
- BICS** *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies at the University of London*
- Burke** Burke, *Greek Religion. Archaic and Classical* (Oxford, 1985)
- **HN** *Homo Necans. The Anthropology of Ancient Greek Sacrificial Ritual and Myth* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1983)
- **DE** *orientalisierende Epoche in der griechischen Religion und Literatur*, SB Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philos.-hist. Kl. 1984, 1.
- **SH** *Structure and History in Greek Mythology and History* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1979)
- CaLanc** *Chœurs de jeunes filles en Grèce archaïque*, 2 vols (Rome, 1977)
- CQ** *Classical Quarterly*
- CR** *Classical Review*
- Met** *Metamorphoses mis à mort* (Paris, 1977)
- **Li** *Introduction de la mythologie* (Paris, 1981)
- FGH** *Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* (Berlin-Leiden, 1923–58)
- GRBS** *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies*
- HSCP** *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*
- IG** *Inscriptiones Graecae*
- JdI** *Journal des études archéologiques des Instituts*
- JHS** *Journal of Hellenic Studies*
- JNES** *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*
- LMC** *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* (Zurich, 1981–)
- MH** *Museum Helveticum*
- PaDa** Beazley, *Paralipomena. Additions to Attic Black-Figure Vase-Painters and to Attic Red-Figure Vase-Painters* (Oxford, 1971)
- PKG** *Poetae Comici Graeci* (Berlin and New York, 1983–)
- RE** *Realencyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft*
- SE** *Supplementum epigraphicum Graecum*
- WG** *Wörterbuch der Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum* 3rd edn (Leipzig, 1915–24)

~~MSR~~ *Re materiali di storia delle religioni*

~~Tag~~ *Fragmentum Graecorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, vol. 1, ed. B. Snell (Göttingen, 1971); vol. 3, ed. S. Radt (1985); vol. 4, ed. S. Radt (1977)

~~ZPE~~ *Schrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*

Preface

This collection of original studies offers new interpretations of some of the best known characters and themes of Greek mythology, reflecting the complexity and fascination of the Greek imagination. Following analyses of the concept of myth and the influence of the Orient on Greek mythology, the succeeding chapters shed new light on the threatening appearance of wolf and werewolf and on such familiar figures as Oedipus, Orpheus and Narcissus. The puzzling relationship of myth and ritual is illuminated by a discussion of the ambiguities in the traditions surrounding Kronos. Where does myth end and history begin? Studies of the first Spartan and Athenian kings demonstrate ways in which myth is manipulated to suit history, and an examination of the early stages of the Delphic oracle shows that some history is actually myth. Finally, an analysis of Greek mythography illustrates how myths were handed down in the Greek tradition before they became part and parcel of Western civilisation. The volume is concluded with a bibliography of the best mythological studies of recent decades. All chapters are based on the most recent insights and methods, and they display a great variety of approaches.

The volume would never have materialised without a chance meeting with Richard Stoneman, Senior Editor at Croom Helm. I am very grateful for his most pleasant co-operation in the preparation of this book. I also owe grateful thanks to Sarah Johnston and Ken Dowden, who were willing to shoulder the difficult task of revising most of the translations. Kees Kuiphof skilfully gave cartographical assistance.

Finally, a Dutch initiative in mythology would have greatly surprised Friedrich Creuzer, one of the great students of Greek mythology in the nineteenth century. Having left Heidelberg in the summer of 1809 to take up a professorship at Leiden, he soon returned to Germany: for, as he put it, he could not conceive any mythological thoughts because the country was too flat.¹ Holland still has no mountains, but interest in mythology abounds as we hope this book may show.

J.B.
Ede, Holland

Note

1. Cf. F. Creuzer, *Aus dem Leben eines alten Professors* (Leipzig and Darmstadt, 1848): "In Holland dann – feine Städte, hübsche Leute – aber ich konnte keinen mythologischen Gedanken fassen in dem flachen Lande." I owe this reference to Albert Henrichs.

What is a Greek Myth?

Jan Bremmer

What exactly is a Greek myth?¹ In the past, many solutions to this problem have been proposed, but in the course of time all have proved to be unsatisfactory.² The most recent analyses stress that myth belongs to the more general class of traditional tales. For example, Walter Burkert, the greatest living expert on Greek religion, has stated that ‘myth is a traditional tale with secondary, partial reference to something of collective importance’.³ This definition raises three important problems that we will discuss briefly in this introduction. First, how traditional is a Greek myth? Second, to what degree does Greek myth contain matter of collective importance? And finally, if myth is a traditional tale – what then is the difference between myth and other genres of traditional tales, such as the fairy-tale or the legend?

1. How Traditional is Greek Myth?

It is extremely difficult to determine the age of the average Greek myth. Many tales were recorded relatively late, and therefore we cannot ascertain the precise date of their origin. Yet Homer already refers to the Theban Cycle, the Argonauts and the deeds of Herakles. Moreover, there are a number of vignette-like passages in his poems in which he briefly mentions heroes such as Hippokoon, Phorbas and Anchises, all of whom are located in the Peloponnese and are also found in mainland traditions. Homer also makes fleeting reference to details that apparently have been derived from little-known sagas that range in setting from Crete to Northern Thessaly, such as ‘the grave of Aipyros where men like to fight hand to hand’ (*Iliad* 2.604), Areithoos ‘the club-bearer’ (7.8f, 137f) or Amyntor who lived in a ‘strong home’ in Eleon (10.266). None of these persons comes from Ionia, Aeolia or the islands, so they most probably derive from sources dating back at least to the time before the Greeks emigrated to those areas at the end of the second millennium BC. Taking the mainland as our point of departure, we can also observe that the archaic poet Alcman (about 600 BC) mentions details about Odysseus and Circe that are different from

those found in Homer but not necessarily of a later date. If, indeed, various figures originate in pre-emigration sources, then the existence of a Mycenaean layer in Greek mythology seems assured.⁴

Can we go back further? The great philologists of the last century discovered that Greek and Vedic poetry shared the formulas *kleos aphthiton*, or 'imperishable glory', and *klea andron*, or 'glories of men'. Further investigations have confirmed the existence of a common Indo-European poetic language; organisations of poets such as the Homeridai of Chios or the Kreophyloi of Samos would have been bearers of this poetic tradition.⁵ Investigations into Indo-European mythological themes have been less successful. The whole fabric of Indo-European mythology, which Max Müller and his contemporaries erected in the course of the nineteenth century, had already collapsed by the end of that century. Yet some complexes stood the test of time. The myth of Helen, for example, has been shown to have close analogies in Vedic and Latvian mythology. In Sparta, Helen was worshipped as the goddess who supervised the life of girls between adolescence and motherhood. As the wedding also plays an important role in Vedic and Latvian traditions, the proto-myth of Helen was probably part of Indo-European wedding poetry.⁶

Can we go back even further? Burkert recently has studied Herakles' capture of cattle, which were hidden in a cave, from a shape-changing opponent. This capture, as he shows, is closely analogous to the Vedic Indra's fight against the demon Visvarupa, or 'of all shapes', who had also hidden his cows in a cave. But Burkert also showed that there are close analogies for these fights in the mythology of various hunting peoples of Siberia and the Arctic.⁷

Another ancient tradition lies behind the epic of the Trojan War. Various leading figures, such as Achilles, display the characteristics of the ephebe, the Greek warrior at the brink of adulthood. Many details of Achilles' life correspond to such figures as CuChulainn, the exemplary ephebic warrior of Ulster; Nestor's youthful exploits are part of a similar initiatory tradition. Moreover, among a number of European peoples the storming of a (fake) castle was part of the young men's rituals. As Fritz Graf observes, the convergence of Greek and Irish tradition strongly suggests an Indo-European epic tradition closely connected with the young warrior's initiation. Myths associated with the central institutions of archaic societies, such as the wedding and the rites of puberty, or with matters of vital concern, such as the quest for animals (Herakles and Indra), have a much better chance of survival, indeed, than myths connected with more temporary institutions, such as the foundation of clans or temples. In the case of initiation, a poetic tradition is all the more probable because some Greek poets (still?) acted as initiators in the archaic age.⁸ The close association of poets with initiation can also be found in *The Book of Dede Korkut*, a collection of tales set in the heroic age of the Oghuz Turks, who in the course of the ninth and tenth centuries emigrated from Siberia in the direction of Anatolia. Moreover, the tradition of the Trojan war

finds a close parallel in Caucasian myths, in which a hero besieges a king who has offended his honour, and takes his castle through a ruse; the storming of a castle is also part of Caucasian folklore. Do we perhaps encounter here mythical themes of Eurasian pastoral peoples that reach back into time immemorial?⁹

On the other hand, myth was also often untraditional. The suitors of Penelope request the newest song (*Odyssey* 1.352), and archaic poets regularly stress their own originality.¹⁰ In fact, many *mythoi* clearly are not very old. Hesiod derived part of his theogony from the Orient (cf. Burkert, this volume); the epic of the *Nostoi*, the homecoming of the Trojan heroes, presupposes Greek colonisation in Southern Italy; and the myth of Theseus' foundation of democracy illustrates the decline of the aristocracy's power in the late archaic age. The respective audiences of these *mythoi* must surely have recognised the novelty of these tales at the time of their first performances, even though they soon became incorporated into the traditional corpus of myths. Mythology, then, was an open-ended system. As has been pointed out recently, it is precisely this improvisatory character of myth that guarantees its centrality in Greek religion. 'It is not bound to forms hardened and stiffened by canonical authority, but mobile, fluent and free to respond to a changing experience of the world.'¹¹ On the other hand, the divine authority of the archaic poet assured the truthfulness of the tale (cf. below). It was only in Hellenistic times that Callimachus (fr. 612) had to write: 'I sing nothing which is not attested'. When the poet had no more divine authority, tradition had to be invoked as the legitimising factor.

2. The Collective Importance of Myth

Having seen that myths can be tales from time immemorial but also contemporary inventions, we will now look at their place in Greek society. In the modern Western world, myths of the Greeks and other peoples are primarily *read*, but in the earliest Greek literature, the Homeric epic, *mythos* meant 'word, tale'.¹² The oldest *mythoi*, then, were tales recited in front of an audience. The fact of oral performance means that myth cannot be looked at in isolation; we must always consider by whom and to whom the tales were told. It is impossible to trace here in detail the development of the triad narrator – *mythos* – audience through the whole of Greek history; for our purpose it is sufficient to make a few observations about the main differences between the archaic age and later periods.

In Homer, the narrator of *mythoi* was the poet, the *aoidos*, who was society's bearer of tradition and its educator *par excellence*. Public performance obliged him to remain aware of his public's taste; unpopular new myths or unacceptable versions of old ones would be rejected by the public and, surely, not repeated in further performances. The poet's stature in society

was reflected by his, in a certain sense, near-supernatural status. He and his songs were called 'divine' and he himself 'of the gods'. His epic poetry was believed to have been transmitted by the Muses who 'watch everything'. The divine origin of his poetry enabled him to invent new myths or change the content of the old ones; he could also freely change the poetic form – the original Indo-European eight-syllable line was developed into the hexameter.¹³

In the course of the archaic age, a whole complex of factors, such as colonisation, the growth of democracy, and the introduction of writing and money, dramatically changed the character of society. These developments also changed the status of the poet, the acceptance of myth, and the nature of the poet's audience. As Claude Calame has shown, the Muses played an increasingly subordinate role in archaic poetry. This declining position, as he persuasively suggests, reflected the poet's more secular role in society and growing consciousness of his own creativity. Moreover, the arrival of literacy enabled intellectuals to fix and scrutinise the tradition. The traditional *mythoi* now came under attack from philosophers and historians – authors who wrote in prose and who did not subject their opinions to the censure of the community in public performance. At first sight, the myths' audience remained the same, as the poets continued to perform in aristocratic circles, but their patrons were now in the process of losing part of their political power – a development that must also have had repercussions for the poet's position in society. These developments accelerated in the course of the classical period, although poets still continued to relate myths (tragedy!), and in the Hellenistic age the poet's function in society had largely been lost to philosophers and historians. The versions of myths that Callimachus and his friends wrote were no longer directed at society at large, but rather primarily at a small circle of literary friends. Post-Hellenistic travellers, such as Pausanias, still recorded the archaic myths connected with the temples they visited, but these tales now had lost completely their erstwhile relevance to the community.¹⁴

In one area, however, certain aspects of myth continued to prosper. The Greek colonisation of the East promoted feverish activity in the invention of mythical founders and genealogies, and in the explanation of strange names. In general, however, the new myths, which were mostly *bricolages* of the old, established ones, no longer were composed by poets but by historians, who wrote in prose and did not claim to be divinely inspired. The popularity of myth lasted well into the Roman Empire, but the *mythoi*, which once helped men to understand or order the world, now functioned primarily as a major part of a cultural tradition whose importance increased as Greek independence diminished. As various cities lost their political significance, it was their mythical past that could still furnish them with an identity and help them to distinguish themselves from other cities. Myth, then, meant rather different things to the Greeks at different stages of their history.¹⁵

3. Myths and Other Traditional Tales

When we take the triad poet – *mythos* – audience as our point of departure, it becomes easier to see the difference between Greek myth and other genres of popular tales, such as the fairy-tale or the legend. Fairy-tales are told primarily in private and in prose; they are situated, furthermore, outside a specific time and place. Whereas Greek myth always details the place and origin of its heroes, fairy-tales content themselves with stating that ‘once upon a time’ a king was ruling – we never hear in which country or in which age. An individual fairy-tale therefore exists in isolation, while a Greek myth evokes further myths in which the same named heroes are involved; it is almost true that every Greek myth is ultimately connected in a chain of association with every other Greek myth. Moreover, fairy-tales are told not to order or explain the world, but to entertain their audience, although moralistic overtones were often introduced.

The English word ‘legend’ comprises two genres of tales that in German are distinguished as *Legende* and *Sage*. The *Legende* is primarily a hagiographical legend, a story in prose about a holy person whose life is held up to the community with the exhortation: ‘go and do likewise’. These stories, then, clearly were invented or told by the church to influence the lives of the faithful. As such, they are restricted in scope and also are typical products of a more literary age – ‘legend’ comes from the Latin *legenda*, or ‘things to be read’.

The *Sage* is a legend that explains buildings or stresses the boundaries between man and animals (cf. Buxton, this volume, [Ch. 4](#)); it accounts for extraordinary events and catastrophes; and it describes a world peopled by spirits and demons. For those who believed these legends, *Sagen* will have functioned very much like *mythoi* in archaic Greece. And just as *mythoi* helped to bolster the identity of the Greeks under the Roman Empire, *Sagen* acquired a political significance in the later nineteenth century when they were collected by German bourgeoisie in search of a common past.¹⁶

On the other hand, although these legends claim to be true, there are no claims of divine inspiration; moreover, the stories normally are told in private and in prose; It has recently been persuasively suggested that the word *Sage* presupposes an archaic, perhaps even Indo-European, narrative prose tradition. Unlike at Rome, however, where the foundation myth of Romulus and Remus was apparently handed down in prose, in archaic Greece myths were the exclusive territory of poets. It is true that distinguished scholars, such as G. S. Kirk, have made use of the notion of the folktale to explain motifs of Greek myth, but it must be stressed that such tales simply are not attested in archaic Greece.¹⁷

What exactly is a Greek myth? We started this chapter with Burkert’s definition of myth as ‘a traditional tale with secondary, partial reference to something of collective importance’. This definition has proved to be valid for

the whole period of Greek history. At the same time, however, we have seen that myths are not always traditional tales, nor is their collective importance the same during the whole of Greek history. Perhaps one could propose a slightly simpler definition: 'traditional tales relevant to society'. It is true that to us the appearance of gods and heroes is an essential part of Greek myth, but the supernatural presence is only to be expected when religion is embedded in society.¹⁸ Western secularised societies have nearly abolished the supernatural, but they usually still have their favourite (historical) tales that serve as models of behaviour or are the expression of the country's ideals. It is their relevance to Greek society that makes the *mythoi* still fascinating today, for however different the Greeks were from us, they were also very much the same.¹⁹

Notes

1. The notes are confined to the most recent literature. I am in general much indebted to Fritz Graf, *Griechische Mythologie* (Munich and Zurich, 1985).

2. For a survey of the various explanations, see G. S. Kirk, *Myth: Its Meaning and Functions in Ancient Mythology and Other Cultures* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1970) 1–41; W. Burkert, 'Mythos und Mythologie', in *Propyläen Geschichte der Literatur*, I (Berlin, 1981) 11–35; Graf, *Mythologie*, 15–57.

3. Traditional tales: Kirk, *Myth*, 31–41 and *The Nature of Greek Myth* (Harmondsworth, 1974) 23–37; Burkert, *S&H*, 23; Graf, *Mythologie*, 7.

4. Pre-Homeric mythology: Graf, *Mythologie*, 58–68. Mycenaean layer: A. Hoekstra, 'Epic Verse before Homer', *Med. Ned. Ak. Wet., Afd. Letterk., N.R.*, 108 (1981) 54–66; note also A. Snodgrass, 'Poet and Painter in Eighth-Century Greece', *Proc. Camb. Phil. Soc.*, 25 (1979) 118–30, esp. 122. Alcman: C. Calame (ed.), *Alcman* (Rome, 1983) 487, 496, 574, 612.

5. Formulas: see most recently E. D. Floyd, 'Kleos *apthiton*: An Indo-European Perspective on Early Greek Poetry', *Glotta*, 58 (1980) 133–57; G. Nagy, 'Another Look at Kleos *Apthiton*', *Würzb. Jahrb.*, 7 (1981) 113–16; but see now M. Finkelberg, *CQ* 36 (1986) 1–5. Poetical language: the standard study is R. Schmitt, *Dichter und Dichtersprache in indogermanischer Zeit* (Wiesbaden, 1967); see most recently W. Meid, *Dichter und Dichtkunst in indogermanischer Zeit* (Innsbruck, 1978); C. Watkins, 'Aspects of IE poetics', in E. Polomé (ed.), *The Indo-Europeans in the 4th and 3rd Millennia* (Ann Arbor, 1982) 104–20. Poetic organisations: W. Burkert, 'Die Leistung eines Kreophylos: Kreophyleer, Homeriden und die archaische Heraklesepeik', *MH*, 29 (1972) 74–85.

6. Helen: M. L. West, *Immortal Helen* (London, 1975); Calame, *Chœurs* I, 333–50 (Helen in Sparta).

7. Herakles: Burkert, *S&H*, 85f, who is overlooked by J. M. Blazquez Martinez, 'Gerion y otros mitos griegos en Occidente', *Gerion*, 1 (1983) 21–38.

8. Initiation and Trojan War: Graf, *Mythologie*, 71–4. Ritual background of Trojan War: J. Bremmer, 'Heroes, Rituals and the Trojan War', *Studi Storico-Religiosi*, 2 (1978) 5–38; F. Bader, 'Rhapsodies homériques et irlandaises', in R. Bloch (ed.), *Recherches sur les religions de l'antiquité classique* (Paris and Geneva, 1980) 9–83. Poet as initiator: Calame, *Chœurs* I, 393–5; Graf, this volume, [Ch. 5, section 9](#); note also J. F. Nagy, *The Wisdom of the Outlaw. The Boyhood Deeds of Finn in Gaelic Narrative Tradition* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1985) Chs. 1 and 6, on Finn as poet and initiator.

9. Oghuz Turks: G. Lewis (ed.), *The Book of Dede Korkut* (Harmondsworth, 1974) 59–87. Caucasian parallels: W. J. Abaew, 'Le Cheval de Troie. Parallèles Caucasiens', *Annales ESC*, 18(1963) 1041–70; Bremmer, 'Heroes', 31 (storming castle). For other possible age-old traditions, see Burkert, *S&H*, 85, 95.

10. Originality of poet: Hom. *Od.* 1.351 f; Alemán fr. 14 Page = 4 Caíame; Pind. *Ol.* 3.4, 9.48f; W. J. Verdenius, 'The Principles of Greek Literary Criticism', *Mnem.* IV 36 (1983) 14–59, esp. 22f (with extensive bibliographies).

11. J. Gould, 'On Making Sense of Greek Religion', in P. Easterling and J. V. Muir (eds), *Greek Religion and Society* (Cambridge, 1985) 1–33, 219–21.

12. For the meaning of *mythos*, see C. Spicq, *Notes de lexicographie néo-testamentaire*, II (Fribourg,

1978) 576–8; Detienne, *Invention*; L. Brisson, *Platon, les mots et les mythes* (Paris, 1982).

13. Poet: H. Maehler, *Die Auffassung des Dichterberufs im frühen Griechentum bis zur Zeit Pindars* (Göttingen, 1963); B. Snell, *Dichtung und Gesellschaft* (Hamburg, 1965); Verdenius, 'Principles', 25–37. Divine origin: Hom. *Il.* 18.604; *Od.* 1.328, 8.498, 17.385 and 518f; Hes. *Th.* 94f; P. Murray, 'Poetic Inspiration in Early Greece', *JHS*, 101 (1981) 87–100; Verdenius, 'Principles', 37–46. Poetic form: N. Berg, 'Parergon metricum: der Ursprung des griechischen Hexameters', *Münch. Stud. zur Sprachw.*, 37(1978) 11–36.

14. Declining role of Muses: C. Calame, 'Entre oralité et écriture: Énonciation et énoncé dans la poésie grecque archaïque', *Semiotica*, 43 (1983) 245–73. Critique of myth: Detienne, *Invention*, 123–54; J. Bremmer, 'Literacy and the Origins and Limitations of Greek Atheism', in J. den Boeft and A. Kessels (eds), *Actus: Studies in Honour of H. L. W. Nelson* (Utrecht, 1982) 43–55. The role of myth in Hellenistic poetry and post-Hellenistic authors is still in need of investigation; there are some good observations in P. Veyne, *Les Grecs ont-ils cru à leurs mythes?* (Paris, 1983).

15. Cf. P. Weiss, 'Lebendiger Mythos: Gründerheroen und städtische Gründungstraditionen im griechisch-römischen Osten', *Wurzb. Jahrb.*, 10 (1984) 179–207.

16. Difference between myths and other traditional tales: see most recently L. Röhrich, 'Märchen-Mythos-Sage', in W. Siegmund (ed.), *Antiker Mythos in unseren Märchen* (Kassel, 1984) 11–35, 187–9; J. Scullion, 'Marchen, Sage, Legende: Towards a clarification of some literary terms used by Old Testament scholars', *Vetus Test.*, 34 (1984) 321–36. Political significance of *Sagen*: R. Schenda, 'Mären von Deutschen Sagen. Bemerkungen zur Produktion von "Volkserzählungen" zwischen 1850 und 1870', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 9 (1983) 26–48.

17. Indo-European prose tradition: E. Risch, 'Homerisch *ennepo*, Lakonisch *epheneponti* und die alte Erzählprosa', *ZPE*, 60(1985) 1–9. Folk tales: Kirk, *Myth and Nature of Greek Myth*.

18. For the notion of embedded religion, see R. C. T. Parker, 'Greek Religion', in *The Oxford History of the Classical World* (Oxford, 1986) 254–74.

19. For information, comments and correction of the English I am indebted to Fritz Graf, Nicholas Horsfall, Sarah Johnston, André Lardinois, Robert Parker, and Professor Rüdiger Schmitt.

Oriental and Greek Mythology: The Meeting of Parallels

Walter Burkert

1. Some General Reflections

Are there migrating myths? This question, which has often been asked, is a fascinating one, but it is not at all clear whether we should start searching for empirical evidence with which to answer it, or preclude it, from the outset, by definition. 'Parallels' have haunted the study of folklore from the start; theories of migration or of multiple, spontaneous generation still confront one another; Adolf Bastian advocated the concept of 'Elementargedanken',¹ Waldemar Liungmann proclaimed 'Traditionswanderungen Euphrat-Rhein'.² The fact that any diffusion of tales must have taken place largely through oral transmission, whereas only written sources are available for historical documentation, multiplies the problems. But it is the very concept of myth that engenders a special difficulty: although no readily available definition of myth has won general acknowledgement,³ the consensus is that myth, compared with folktale in general, must have a special social and intellectual relevance to archaic societies. This requirement binds myth to particular cultural and ethnic entities, to traditional closed societies or groups. Some of the most successful modern interpretations of even Greek mythology are based on such an assumption, and concentrate on the closed circle of the unique Greek polis.⁴ But the more illuminating and fulfilling the message of myth may appear in such surroundings, the less transferable, by definition, it will be. Leibnizian monads stand without windows through which to communicate with what might be outside. The most narrow definition of myth as 'the spoken part of the ritual' generally is rejected nowadays, but the connection of myth with ritual remains an important fact, and the concept of 'charter myth' repeatedly proves useful. But indeed, on account of this, myth seems tied to historically unique organisations or even organisms; acceptance of this assumption would dispose of any idea of 'migrating myths' were it not for migrating societies: the Locrians in Italy worshipped their Ajax as they had in central Greece; the begging priests of the Anatolian Mother Goddess, the *metragyrtai*, brought

ritual castration and the corresponding Attis myth to the Greek and Roman world.⁵ But these are special cases.

Yet it is clear that Greek mythology spread widely throughout the Mediterranean, dominating in particular the imaginations of the Etruscans and Romans; to explain this diffusion as either a series of misunderstandings or a schoolchild's memorisation of literature, rather than as an example of living and 'genuine' myth, would be much too simple. But if it is granted that Greek myths 'migrated' to Italy, then not even Greek myth can be assumed to have arisen spontaneously from uncontaminated 'origins'; it arose within a society that formed itself in intense competition with older, Eastern civilisations.

Myth, in fact, is a multi-dimensional phenomenon, and although its function is most vital in closed archaic societies, it should be seen and investigated in all its various aspects. There are two main dimensions of myth, corresponding to the well-known linguistic distinction between the 'connotative' and 'denotative' functions of language:⁶ there is a narrative structure that can be analysed as a syntagmatic chain of 'motifemes', and there is some reference, which often may be secondary and tentative, to phenomena of common reality that are thus articulated, expressed and communicated; this reference is most manifest in the use of proper names. In most mythical texts, both dimensions intertwine and influence one another; their dynamics, however, are quite different. The narrative structures are based on a very few general human or even pre-human programmes of action, and thus are quite easily understood and encoded in memory, to be reproduced, or re-created, even from incomplete records. This is the fascination of a tale to which we all are sensitive. One favourite tale type is the 'quest' – the subject of Vladimir Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale*. Its ubiquitous subtype is the 'combat tale'; other types include 'the girl's tragedy' and 'sacrifice and restitution'.⁷ The denotative 'application' on the other hand, which turns a tale to myth, is anything but general; it depends on particular situations, which may well be unique. Yet because tales are a means of communication, not private signs, particularisation is limited; there are no private myths. In fact, there are varying levels of generalisation in most human aspects of reality; certain societal configurations and problems will recur in similar forms in many places; the nature-culture antithesis, dominating the analysis of myths by Claude Lévi-Strauss,⁸ is basic to mankind, and the particular theme of life-versus-death opens still wider horizons. Thus, some diffusion not only of tales but of myths, including definite 'applications', becomes possible after all. Even if 'genuine', living myth is rooted in a special habitat, it may well find fertile soil, to which it can easily adapt, in other places or times; it may even transform new surroundings, processing reality, as it were, by its special dynamics.

One should still pay attention to the distinction made by Alan Dundes, among others,⁹ between 'motifemes' and motifs: although a tale, even a mythical tale, consists of a well-structured chain of 'motifemes', each of which

has its necessary and immutable place, there are also single surface elements that are detachable and may 'jump' from one tale to another, especially if some original, 'salient' feature of one catches the imagination, like genes, as it were, 'jumping' between chromosomes. Thus, certain motifs recur throughout the world; or at any rate this is the impression conveyed by Stith Thompson's indispensable *Motif-Index*.¹⁰ Whether historical diffusion has occurred even at the level of motifs is still a serious question. But it is a question that must be kept distinct from the problem of 'migrating myths', the concept of which implies the transfer of a narrative chain and thus also, usually, the transfer of 'application', or the message of the myth.

In the catch-phrase 'Oriental and Greek' the specialist still hears a ring of dilettantism; methodological circumspection encourages avoidance of the topic. Sheer accumulation of evidence, however, has begun to force the issue. Greek literary culture did not thrive in isolation, but rather in the shadow of older civilisations, assuming and then outgrowing what was ready at hand.¹¹ The term 'oriental' in itself is more than questionable; it is a label that all too clearly echoes the ethnocentric perspective of 'Westerners' and tends to obscure the fact that quite different civilisations existed more or less to the east, or the southeast, of Europe. There was the first rise of high culture, characterised by state organisation and literacy, in Mesopotamia and Egypt in the third millennium AD. Whereas Egypt is enclosed by natural boundaries, Mesopotamian influence began to spread towards both the Mediterranean and the Indus at quite an early date. During the second millennium there developed several adjacent civilisations each of an individual type, Europe taking a share of cultural pride with the rise of the Minoan-Mycenaean civilisation. This civilisation, unfortunately, has not produced any extant literary texts as yet and thus must still remain in the background as far as myth study is concerned. More fertile archives are provided by the continuing literature of Egypt and Mesopotamia, or come from Syrian Ugarit-Ras Shamra and from Anatolian Hattusa-Boğazköy. Bronze Age traditions end abruptly in both places, as in Greece, at about 1200 AD. After the 'Dark Ages' there emerge, in addition to some relics of Hittite tradition in Southern Anatolia, a lively and varied urban civilisation in Syria and Palestine, which can claim the decisive invention of the 'Phoenician' script, and also the 'miracle of Greece', which asserts its status through the poetry of Homer and Hesiod. This contribution was to endure, whereas, of the Syrian-Palestinian literature, only the Hebrew Bible was to survive later catastrophes.

What is left, thus, is a chance selection taken from much richer literatures and, presumably, oral cultures, which can be the basis for a comparison of 'oriental' and Greek mythology: Sumero-Akkadian and Egyptian sources are rich but geographically distant from those of Greece; Old Testament texts are of a very peculiar type. There remain the fragmentary tablets from Bronze Age Hattusa and Ugarit; the Phoenician and Aramaic literature from Iron Age Syria, which must have been closest to that of the Greeks, has vanished

completely, as has the Phrygian and Lydian literature of Anatolia, if indeed it ever existed.

There are two main periods when cultural contacts between the East and Greece apparently were most intensive: the late Bronze Age (14/13th century AD) on the one hand (to Cyrus Gordon is due the concept of an 'Aegean Koine' for this period¹²) and the 8/7th century AD, when Phoenicians and Greeks were to penetrate the whole of the Mediterranean in a competitive effort. The latter has been called the 'orientalising period' by archaeologists; its historical background is the military expansion of Assyria that brought unity and devastation to Late Hittites, Syrians, Palestinians and Egyptians. That the later periods shall not concern us here should not detract from their importance; at that time, however, Greek civilisation had long reached its own form and was repelling all unassimilated 'barbarian' elements. The formative period of Greek civilisation, if it ever existed, must have belonged to the 'orientalising period'.

2. Ninurta and Herakles

Of all Greek mythological figures, Herakles is perhaps the most complicated and the most interesting. He is by far the most popular of Greek heroes, a fact reflected by the formidable mass of evidence. At the same time there is not one authoritative literary text to account for this character – in the way Homer's *Iliad* accounts for Achilles – but rather a plethora of passing references; furthermore, no single place gives him a home and background, but rather the whole Mediterranean provides a changing complex of stories connected to quite different local cults. Yet there is an identity marked by his name and by a canon of iconography that was established at an early date. The attempts to understand the origins and the development of the Herakles figure as a series of literary 'inventions' are bound to fail.¹³

The identity of Herakles consists in a series of exploits, *âthla*, which all are of the 'quest' type. Most of them have to do with animals; their canonical number is twelve. Herakles is a marginal figure, wearing a lion skin, wielding a club or a bow, leading an itinerant life. He has an intermediate status even with regard to gods, he is worshipped both as a dead hero and as an immortal god. Although invincible, he must submit to the command of a king of 'wide power', 'Eurystheus'. His father is Zeus, the ruling god of the pantheon.

Ever since the oriental evidence became available, striking Mesopotamian parallels to the Herakles figure have been noticed.¹⁴ New texts and pictorial representations are still turning up and more surprises may lie ahead. One important Sumerian-Akkadian text, 'Ninurta and the Asakku', was finally published in 1983.¹⁵

The god Ninurta, 'Lord of the Earth', who became conflated with Ningirsu, 'Lord of Girsu', at an early date,¹⁶ is a valiant champion who fights monsters,

proving victorious in each case. His renown – and this has become fully known only with the recent publication of the text – is based on a series of twelve ‘labours’: he overcame, killed, and brought to his city twelve fabulous monsters. They include a wild bull or bison, a stag, the Anzu-bird, a lion, ‘terror of the gods’, and above all a ‘seven-headed serpent’; naturally this last attracted attention most of all since it had become known from texts and pictures. The series has been called ‘the trophies of Ninurta’. An enumeration of twelve labours is also contained in King Gudea’s description of the temple of Ningirsu at Lagash, known as Gudea’s ‘Cylinder A’.¹⁷ An incomplete list occurs in another Sumerian-Akkadian literary composition, ‘The Return of Ninurta to Nippur’.¹⁸ None of the texts, so far, gives an elaborate narrative account of Ninurta/Ningirsu’s ‘trophies’, they are just mentioned as if they were a well-known series. The epic texts may be somewhat later than King Gudea’s reign, which is dated to c. 2140 AD, but clearly belong to the epoch of ‘Sumerian renaissance’ (22/21st century AD). Consider that, in addition to ‘twelve labours’, Ninurta is a son of Enlil, the storm god, the ruling god of the pantheon, that he is said to have ‘brought’ the trophies to his city,¹⁹ that he is usually identified with the figure of a god with club, bow and animal’s skin on Mesopotamian seals,²⁰ and the association with Herakles becomes inescapable. Levy and Frankfort, impressed by the seal picturing the fight with the seven-headed snake, have already stated that this must be a case of migration of myth from East to West (n 14); van Dijk is positive about the connection, too, although he prefers to hypothesise a ‘common source’ in prehistory.

As one looks more closely at details, however, the outlines of the myths become less distinctive, and peculiarities come to the foreground that make the ‘parallels’ less striking. It is not only that the ‘trophies’ are not quite the same in different texts (the same can be said for the labours of Herakles), but also that some of them remain quite obscure,²¹ and even those readily understood include ‘gypsum’ and ‘strong copper’, demons difficult to imagine in confrontation with Herakles. What is more important is that the myths of Ninurta/Ningirsu are deeply enrooted in the world of Sumer, the cults and the temples. Gudea’s Cylinder A assigns a place to all the twelve ‘trophies’ at the Ningirsu temple of Lagash, at a ‘place of libations’, i.e. a place integrated in the temple cult. ‘Ninurta and the Asakku’ tells how a demon of the ‘Mountain’ was overcome in order to make the mountains available for mining, and the ‘fate’ of 19 minerals fittingly concludes the narrative; it was Gudea who started the economic exploitation of the ‘mountains’; his patron god therefore assumes the role of culture hero in this context. The poem, no doubt, was to be recited at a festival,²² this function is clearer still in the case of ‘Ninurta’s Return to Nippur’. We are dealing with myths in the full sense, in their unique historical setting – which makes them unlikely candidates for ‘migration’. Ninurta/Ningirsu turns out to be so very Sumerian that the resemblance to Herakles fades.

One might even become suspicious that orientlists, who are still based

strongly in a classical background, sometimes find their evidence to be just slightly more Greek than would an untried eye. Van Dijk would allow the Sumerian 'stag with six heads' to correspond to both the Cerynthian hind and the Erymanthian boar – neither of which, incidentally, is known to have had more than one head – and wishes to add cows to the exploits of Ninurta.²³ More disquieting is the fact that Gilgamesh has been credited with a 'lion skin' in practically all translations available, whereas the crucial word in the Akkadian text may equally be read as 'dog skin', which seems to suit the occasion better: to put on this skin is an act of self-abasement in the context of mourning for Enkidu.²⁴

To complicate matters further, there are other identifications for both Ninurta and Herakles in the dialogues of East and West: the Asakku monster in 'Ninurta and the Asakku' couples with a mountain, begetting a brood of formidable stones that frightens even the gods.²⁵ This seems parallel to the Hittite myth of Kumarbi begetting Ullikummi, the diorite monster destined to overthrow the gods.²⁶ If Kumarbi, in turn, is understood to correspond to Kronos, and Ullikummi to Typhon, then the champion and saviour of the gods, in line with Ninurta and the Hittite weather god, would be Zeus instead of Herakles. In fact, Ninurta, when fighting the Asakku, has all the equipment of a weather god, including the rainstorm and the thunderbolt. When, on the other hand, knowledge of the 'seven planets' was transmitted from Babylonia to the Greeks, probably in the fifth century, Ninurta's star was 'translated' as that of Kronos/Saturnus, whereas Marduk's star became that of Zeus/Jupiter, with Herakles taking no part.²⁷ On the other hand, there is the well-known identification of Herakles with Melqart of Tyre, which, although its basis remains unclear to us, was taken for granted for many centuries.²⁸ Was the basis primarily the gods' role in colonisation, or the fact that both were immortalised through fire? Another, much discussed syncretism occurred at Tarsus in Cilicia, where Santas/Sandon was understood to represent Herakles, again, as it seems, in the context of a fire ritual.²⁹ This syncretism in no way can be traced to Ninurta/Ningirsu. There is, moreover, an identification of Herakles with Nergal, the Mesopotamian god of the Netherworld,³⁰ whose iconography includes club and bow. It has been suggested that even Herakles' name can be derived from that of Erragal-Nergal,³¹ but such suggestion rests on uncommonly slippery grounds.

Thus, the real problem is not a lack but rather a surplus of interrelations. Similarities within the myths and iconographies of a large group of divine figures native to several adjacent civilisations or language groups seem to be 'family resemblances', but there is not a single clear line that ties one element to another and to nothing else. There is no single 'Herakles myth' that could have been passed, like a sealed parcel, to new possessors at a certain time and place. Communication is broad but indistinct.

In fact, we are dealing here with the most general type of tale, the 'quest' and 'combat tale'. The snake or dragon is suited ideally to play the role of the

adversary in this context,³² as is the lion in more heroic variants. Even a widely significant number such as twelve could recur in different cultures independently. Any connection with the twelve signs of the zodiac, incidentally, should be discarded as far as the older period is concerned.³³

And yet the parallels between Ninurta and Herakles seem deep and pervasive. Their quests, fulfilling the basic goal of 'get and bring', serve their communities by making the surroundings humanly manageable, by turning 'nature' into 'culture', be it by taming animals or by disclosing minerals. Both Herakles and Ninurta are culture heroes; a comparison of the two obviously aids in interpretation by placing this specific role of theirs in sharper relief.³⁴

It is the leitmotiv of the 'dragon with seven heads' that encourages one to assume more direct connections. Seven is a favourite number in Eastern Semitic civilisations. The seven-headed snake first makes its appearance in glyptic art³⁵ and also appears somewhat later in Sumerian literature. The Sumerian – Akkadian bilingual texts remained available until the fall of Niniveh; a list of Ninurta's trophies, including the seven-headed snake, entered into a ritual litany used in the temple cult of the first millenium.³⁶ The Sumerian designation *muš-sag-imin* is unequivocal and readily understood, as is the Akkadian translation, *sēru seba qaqqadašu*. There is clear evidence that the god slaying the seven-headed serpent entered West Semitic literature in the Bronze Age and survived there down to the first millenium; the champion is Baal at Ugarit. but the text describing the exploit recurs nearly word for word in Isaiah's praise of Jahwe.³⁷ The formula must have been preserved orally, as part of a ritual litany. This still does not tell us how, when and where this motif reached the Greek world. Herakles fighting the hydra appears as a drawing on Boeotian fibulae about 700 BC.³⁸ It is not possible to show iconographic dependency on an Eastern model in this case, but for the curious detail that a crab is connected with the scene, whereas crabs (or scorpions) appear on the earliest, pre-Sargonic representation.³⁹ It would be excessively sceptical to deny any connection with the East, where a broad and continuous tradition of the 'seven-headed snake' is established by the documents we have, but the contacts must have taken place at an inaccessible level of oral tales. The lion fight enters Greek iconography somewhat earlier and clearly derives from Eastern prototypes; but this is a separate tradition.⁴⁰

The hypothesis of borrowing, however, does not explain why Greek mythology locates the dragon fight at Lerna, a place of springs where the dragon developed into a water snake, *hydra*, or the details of the crab's and Iolaus' participation in the combat, or why the lion was transferred to Nemea. Local, perhaps pre-existing Argive traditions may have been overlaid by oriental influence. It might be claimed that we are tracing only single motifs that 'jumped' between basically similar yet separate mythical conceptions. We remain completely in the dark as to the question whether a complete system of 'twelve labours' ever was transmitted. If such a list of Herakles' labours in Greece can be traced to Peisandros of Rhodos, i.e. before or about 600 BC,

transmission of a complete set could be imagined. Frank Brommer, not a negligible expert, insists that the cycle is not attested unequivocally before 300 AD.⁴¹ Most scholars, however, would be inclined to use the twelve metopes of the temple of Zeus at Olympia to establish a clear *terminus ante quem* for the cycle of twelve. Even so, the gaps in our documentation cannot be closed.

3. Cosmogonic Myth

Few events in Greek studies of this century can rival the impact Kumarbi created around 1950. There had been signals before, but it was Güterbock's *Kumarbi* of 1946, made widely known by Albin Lesky, among others,⁴² that definitely drew the attention of Hellenists to the Hittites. At nearly the same time the epoch-making decipherment of Linear B engendered a general enthusiasm for the Bronze Age, and Boğazköy-Hattusa and Mycenae began to be viewed as partners, not to forget Bronze Age Troy.

The Hittite text that has been called 'Kingship in Heaven' offers parallels to Hesiod's *Theogony* so close in outline and details that even sceptics could hardly object to their connection. Both texts present a sequence of divine dynasties, each being overthrown by the next, until the ruling god of the pantheon, the weather god, finally assumes control. The god 'Heaven' himself, Anu/Uranos, is vanquished by means of castration, performed by Kumarbi in the Hittite version, Kronos in the Greek; the castrator is an intermediate figure, who rises to power only to lose it again. His speciality is swallowing what he cannot contain: Kumarbi swallows the 'manhood of Anu' and becomes pregnant with three gods, among them the weather god; Kronos swallows his own children, including the weather god Zeus. These chronologically parallel correspondences of extremely strange events leave no doubt that the texts are related intimately, the Hittite text being earlier by some 500 years. It is possible, of course, to stress the differences amidst the common features,⁴³ or in a Freudian vein to point to 'unconscious human desires' underlying both versions;⁴⁴ but that diffusion, nay, borrowing of myth did occur in this case has not been seriously denied.

The main problem that seemed to remain was whether such borrowing took place during the Bronze Age or later during the 'orientalising epoch', i.e. around the time of Hesiod. The degree of transformation and re-elaboration of oriental materials in both Hesiod and Homer and the splendour of the Mycenaean world together argue for an early transmission, but the trade and communication routes from the 'Late Hittites' and from Syria via Cyprus right to Hesiod's Euboea have attracted greater attention recently; evidently there were quite intensive contacts in the eighth century.⁴⁵ It is clear that the two theses – Bronze Age and Iron Age transmission – are not mutually exclusive; there may well have been early contacts and late reinforcements. The decision thus mainly depends on general presumptions about stability or mutability of

an oral system of myth.

Questions become more complex, however, as it is realised that in this case, too, it is not enough to compare one Hittite text with one work of Hesiod in order to establish a one-way connection. As in the case of the Herakles themes, there exists quite a family of related texts that represent several civilisations and literatures; it becomes troublesome to identify definite channels in a complicated network. 'Kingship in Heaven' has a kind of sequel, 'The Song of Ullikummi':⁴⁶ Kumarbi, dethroned, takes his revenge by copulating with a rock and engendering the diorite monster that is to overthrow the gods. This story evidently corresponds to the Greek story of Typhoeus/Typhon, who challenges the reign of Zeus after the Titans' defeat. The connection is made certain by a detail of locality: the gods in 'Ullikumi' assemble on Mount Casius in Cilicia, and it is on this very mountain that Zeus fights with Typhon, according to Apollodorus.⁴⁷ The reference to a region where Hittite, Hurrite and Ugaritic influence meet could not be clearer.

Yet the Apollodorean version of the Typhon fight bears still stronger resemblance to another Hittite text, 'The Myth of Illuyankas',⁴⁸ in which a dragon fights the weather god. In both tales the weather god is defeated by his adversary in the first onslaught, and vital parts of his body are taken from him – heart and eyes in the Hittite text, sinews in Apollodorus – which must be recovered by a trick, in order that the weather god may resume battle and emerge victorious. Illuyankas is a 'snake', Typhoeus is endowed with snakeheads in Hesiod and has a snake's tail in Apollodorus and in sixth-century iconography.⁴⁹ Typhon, thus, could be called a conflation of Ullikummi and Illuyankas, although this still would be simplistic. His name has been connected with the Semitic word 'North' – *šapōn* in Hebrew. There is the 'Mountain of the North', which, from Syria, again would be Mount Casius; there is a 'Baal of the North', *Baal Šapūna*.⁵⁰ In fact, Typhon has the character of a storm god himself. He is thus a complex figure that cannot be derived from one or two threads of a linear transmission. The complexity of mythical tradition even within the world of the Hittites is exemplified by a sudden reference in the 'Ullikummi' text to 'the olden copper knife with which they separated heaven and earth',⁵¹ which reflects a version of the cosmic myth especially close to that of the Hesiodic Kronos, who cuts Heaven from Earth with a steel knife, but apparently different from that of Kumarbi, as found in the text 'Kingship in Heaven'.

Hittite and Ugaritic texts have restored the respectability of an account of Phoenician mythology that survives in an elaboration of imperial date, by Herennius Philon of Byblos.⁵² Hesiodic touches in his account cannot be denied, but he has four generations of 'kings' in heaven, *Elioun* 'the Highest' preceding Uranos and thus corresponding to *Alalu* in 'Kingship in Heaven'. This is enough to establish the survival of Bronze Age cosmic mythology in Phoenician cities down to late antiquity, although probably neither in unitary nor unchangeable forms.

Hittite and Ugaritic civilisations communicated both directly and through a third civilisation, that of the Hurrites; the names Kumarbi and Ullikummi are Hurrite, and Hurrite influence is prominent in ritual as in mythology. But interconnections extend still further. Even before the Hittite discoveries, Francis Macdonald Cornford,⁵³ in the wake of the 'Myth and Ritual' movement, had recognised the remarkable structural resemblance of Hesiod's *Theogony* to the Babylonian epic of creation, *Enuma elish*,⁵⁴ a systematic investigation of the relationships, including those involving Kumarbi, was undertaken by Gerd Steiner. *Enuma elish*, too, includes a sequence of ruling gods among whom arise two major conflicts; a father god is laid to rest – although not 'Heaven' in this case, but Apsu, the 'Water of the Depths' – and the leading god of the pantheon – Marduk in the case of Babylonia – qualifies for the kingship through a fierce fight. *Enuma elish*, however, is only one of several Mesopotamian creation stories, and by no means the earliest. One important precedent, as it now turns out, is 'Ninurta and the Asakku'.⁵⁵ The adversary in this text, coupling with the mountain and begetting stones, is an avatar, in turn, of Kumarbi and Ullikummi (n 26). We finally begin to hear a many-voiced interplay of Sumerian, Akkadian, Hittite and West Semitic texts, all of which seem to have some connection with Hesiod. It is impossible, however, to construct a convincing stemma of these relations; perhaps it would not even make sense to try. It is better to acknowledge the lively communication between these societies and to take into account the general background of the myths when interpreting the special adaptations found in the single texts that have survived by chance.

A remarkable addition to the Greek corpus has recently emerged: the Derveni papyrus preserves quotations from an early Orphic theogony, which can probably be dated to the sixth century AD.⁵⁶ This theogony includes generations of 'Kings' among the gods, corresponding closely to those in Hesiod, but also diverges in some remarkable ways. We find that the castration of Uranos by Kronos, who committed 'a great deed', is interpreted by the commentator as the separation of heaven and earth; later, however, Zeus is made to 'swallow the genitals' of the god 'who first had ejaculated the brilliance of the sky (*aithér*)'; this must be Uranos, the 'first king'.⁵⁷ Through this act Zeus somehow gets pregnant with all the other gods, the rivers, springs, and all other sorts of beings; they all 'grew in addition on him' (12.4), whereas he had become the only one, the *monogenés* (12.6). Surprisingly enough, this text thus preserves the most striking incident of the Kumarbi story: the swallowing of the genitals and the conception of mighty gods, including a river – the Tigris in the case of Kumarbi. It is also remarkable that the Orphic theogony has four generations of 'kings' among the gods,⁵⁸ as in the Hittite text and in Philon of Byblos, although the count has been shifted by the addition of Dionysos and the dropping of a king before Uranos. This may be connected with the fact that Zeus fills the role of Kumarbi. The Derveni text has many lacunae and interpretations will remain controversial; but it does

prove, finally, that Oriental-Greek relations, at least in regard to cosmogony, were not confined to the single channel that led to Hesiod. There was much more around than we had imagined.

Cosmogonic myth, for us, has a special dignity and significance because it appears to foreshadow the philosophy that was to evolve with the Presocratics. This was already the perspective of Plato and Aristotle,⁵⁹ and it now appears that 'the origin of Greek philosophy from Hesiod to Parmenides' – to paraphrase a well-known title⁶⁰ – must be extended back to Sumerians, Babylonians and Hittites, not to mention the Egyptians.

There is a certain danger in this perspective, which might be called the teleological fallacy: instead of being judged in its own right, a phenomenon is judged by what was to take its place in later evolution. This is not to deny that the stories of procreation and combat that make up the narrative structure of mythical cosmogony show remarkable speculative energy and acquire a unique appeal by means of the repercussions of the vast and wondrous object to which they are applied. But at the same time, cosmogonical myths, just as other myths, have settings and functions defined and particularised by the time and place in which their archaic community of origin exists. In the Near East, cosmogony had special relationships to ritual. It was the discovery that *Enuma elish* was recited at the Babylonian New Year festival that triggered the 'Myth and Ritual' movement,⁶¹ the exaggerations of which should not obscure the basic facts. Older compositions such as *Lugal-e* no less clearly refer to festivals; *Illuyankas* is explicitly called the cult legend for the Purulli festival of the Hittites.⁶² Theodor Gaster may have gone too far in construing just one pattern of dramatic festival to which the myths should be related.⁶³ But it is evident that stories about the generations of gods and their final fight for power were understood to reflect and comment upon the establishment of power in the city, which was renewed periodically at the New Year festival. Ritual is the enactment of antitheses, from which the thesis of the present order – the status quo – differs; and myth tells about distant times when all the things we take for granted and consider self-evident or 'natural' were 'not yet' there: the past reflected by ritual presents alternatives, inchoate and perverse in contrast to what has been achieved. It is most remarkable that Greece, unlike other ancient societies, did not utilise these applications of cosmogonic myth in permanent institutions. The festival of Kronia,⁶⁴ fittingly placed before the New Year festival, could be compared, but it remained rather insignificant in the sequence of celebrations. Zeus' fights with the Titans and Typhon, as far as we can see, never directly entered ritual; they were used freely, however, in art and poetry, retaining a message of sovereignty against debased enemies; thus Typhōs is introduced in Pindar's first Pythian ode. Cosmogonic myth in the narrower sense equally remained free for rethinking by the Presocratic philosophers.

Yet cosmogonical myth had fulfilled still another requirement: it formed part of incantations for magical healing. Private superstition may seem a

strange bedfellow with august ceremonies of the cities and with nascent philosophy. But cosmogony makes sense even there: as illness is an indication that something has gone wrong and is moving towards catastrophe, it is of vital importance to find a fresh start; the most thorough method is to create a world anew, acknowledging the dangerous forces preceding or still surrounding this *kosmos* but extolling the victorious power that guarantees life and lasting order. Thus, in Babylonian texts we find cosmogonies used as charms against a toothache or a headache, or for facilitating childbirth; practically all the literary texts can also be used as mythical precedences of magical action: to stop evil winds, to procure rain, to ward off pestilence. The people who performed such cures, whether we call them priests or magicians, were the intellectuals of their epoch, and they were often mobile groups that could successfully make a living in foreign lands. In classical Greece, itinerant priests who offered various cures accompanied by pertinent myths and rituals were known as ‘Orphics’: it is all the more remarkable that Near Eastern myths can be found in Orphic tradition. Even the notorious Orphic myth of anthropogony, the rise of mankind from the soot of the Titans who had killed Dionysos, has its closest analogy in Mesopotamian myths about the origin of man from the blood of rebellious gods, slain in revenge.⁶⁵

One ‘conduit’⁶⁶ through which cosmogonic myth was transported from East to West may thus be identified with these itinerant magicians or charismatics. Yet detailed documentation is still not available, and we cannot fix either time or place in a precise way. There may have been other, contemporaneous channels of communication, operating at the various levels of folktale, intellectual curiosity, or even literature. How much our knowledge depends on chance has been shown once more by the Derveni find, a stroke of luck not likely to occur a second time.

4. Trails of Iconography

Although mythological research normally gropes in the dark for a realm of oral tradition that is not directly accessible, one form of evidence still springs to the eye; it is especially rich and influential just by its permanence, and its time and place of origin is usually identifiable: the pictorial tradition, iconography. Pictures or sculptures may survive for millenia; pictures easily jump language barriers. If myths are expressed in pictures, these play a fundamental role in the fixation, propagation and transmission of those myths: haven’t most of us formed our concept of ‘dragon’ from the pictures we have seen, probably at an early age?

In fact it is neither natural nor necessary that pictures should refer to myths or tales. Judging from present evidence there were no representations of this kind in Mycenaean art.⁶⁷ Yet *Sagenbilder* make their appearance in Greek art about 700 AD and have played a prominent role ever since,⁶⁸ and there were

precedents both in Mesopotamian and Egyptian art. Of course, our knowledge is largely dependent upon the physical properties of the materials used: some, such as textiles⁶⁹ or paintings on wooden tablets had hardly a chance of survival; there was just a slight chance for some of the most important, wall paintings and metal reliefs; stone sculptures are most durable, but least transportable; the richest corpus that remains is seals, especially the typical Mesopotamian cylinder seals and their impressions preserved in clay.⁷⁰ Painted ceramics were not used for pictures of this kind in the East.

Yet mythical picture books must be used with special care. Pictures are just signs, although we habitually give them some signification. This signification often may be some definite action, such as greeting, fighting, love-making, and this makes correspondence with a tale possible, as any narrative structure consists of a sequence of actions. Combat scenes, especially, can hardly be misunderstood. The sequence, nevertheless, cannot be contained in one picture; the production of a sequence of pictures to illustrate one tale is a rare and special development. It is equally impossible for a simple picture to give the kind of explicit reference that language affords by proper names. Thus on principle it is unclear whether a picture refers to an individual myth, made specific by the proper names contained in it, such as 'Herakles' or 'Achilles'. Again, to add names by writing, or to work out a specific canon of attributes to differentiate gods, heroes or saints is a rare and secondary development. Greeks have used these devices since the archaic age. Oriental art is less distinct. At the same time iconography develops its own canon, as pictures are copied from pictures: these are clear and demonstrable filiations, but totally at the level of *signifiant*, with little regard for signification and none at all for reference. Thus iconography clearly indicates connections even between different civilisations; yet as re-interpretations and misunderstandings may occur at any time, pictures cannot securely indicate the diffusion of a myth. Even the certainty that special compositions of mythological content have been transmitted is not yet a solution to the problem of 'travelling myths'.

One iconographic pattern of Mesopotamian art demands special attention because it is connected with the most prominent literary text of the East: *Gilgamesh and Enkidu slaying Humbaba*. It may be described as the symmetrical three-person combat scene: two champions are attacking from either side a wild man, represented *en face* in the middle, nearly collapsing on his knees in the 'Knielauf' position, which signifies an attempt at escape. This type makes its appearance in Old Babylonian times and continues to appear down to the Assyrian and neo-Babylonian epoch, spreading also to Iran, Southern Anatolia, Syria and Galilea.⁷¹ There is no direct proof that the figures should be called Gilgamesh, Enkidu, and Humbaba, in accordance with *Gilgamesh* Tablet III to V; but because Humbaba is a man of the woods, and there is written evidence that Humbaba is represented by a frontal grim yet grinning face,⁷² this identification of the 'wild man' at the centre of the composition with his mask-like face has usually been accepted for at least the

bulk of the representations. It is almost the only mythical scene in Mesopotamian iconography that thus can be interpreted as referring to a literary text; normally glyptic art seems to be just heraldic, symbolic or ritualistic.

It has been pointed out more than once that in Greek art this scene became 'Perseus killing the Gorgo':⁷³ at the centre is the Gorgo, with the mask-like, grinning face of a 'wild' creature, in 'Knielauf' position; the champions – Perseus and Athena – stand on either side, taking hold of the monster. Even the detail that is so important for the Greek tale, that Perseus should turn his eyes away from the monster, has oriental precedents. In these, the champions are frequently differentiated, one wearing a long garment, the other a short one; for the Greeks, the fighter with the long skirt has become a female, Athena. The correspondence is compelling: the Greek artists must have seen oriental models of the type, presumably either in the form of seals or metal reliefs.

At the same time, it is clear that this transference of a mythical scene does not constitute a transmission of myth. There is not complete misunderstanding either, however: the signification of the 'combat scene', two fighters helping each other against a 'wild' creature, has been understood clearly. Yet the contexts do not mingle. The Humbaba fight belongs to the exploits of a cultural hero: Gilgamesh secures the access to the 'cedar forest' in order to procure timber for the city, a feat analogous to Ninurta's fighting the monster of the mountain. The tale of Perseus, on the other hand, has clear characteristics of an initiation myth: the hero travels to marginal areas to get his special weapon that commands death. The most striking detail, the hero turning his face away from the enemy, proves to be a creative misunderstanding: on the oriental prototype the hero is looking for a goddess who is about to pass him a weapon; Greek imagination has a monster instead with petrifying eyes. Details of the Gorgo type, incidentally, have their special iconographic ancestry; it cannot be derived fully from Humbaba.⁷⁴ The new creation, for the Greeks, is an iconographic sign without special ties to rituals or local groups, to be used freely in an 'apotropaic' sense on pediments, shields, or in other contexts, a terror to scare away mischief from temples or warriors.

There is a curious seal from Cyprus belonging to this context that deserves special mention.⁷⁵ It differs from the type in so far as it has only one champion. He is decidedly turning his face away from the monster, which he is seizing with his left hand while raising his weapon, a *harpe*, with his right. The monster, *en face* and in 'Knielauf', has Egyptianising locks and something like diffuse rays stretching out from its head – for Greeks, these would be the snakes surrounding the Gorgo's head – and the feet are huge bird's claws. This detail is securely rooted in Mesopotamian iconography, where Lamashtu and Pazuzu, dreaded demons, are represented in this way. Both, incidentally, have some further traits in common with the Gorgo (n 74). The picture was published at the beginning of this century in Roscher's *Lexikon der*

griechischen und römischen Mythologie as being a clear illustration of the Perseus story; Pierre Amiet, on the other hand, has recently interpreted the seal in the context of Ugaritic mythology, without ever mentioning Perseus and the Greeks. It is unclear whether the seal came from a Phoenician or a Greek city of Cyprus; interpretation must probably remain a riddle. There were also other oriental or orientalising versions of the Perseus myth. At Tarsos he had some special connection with fish;⁷⁶ this may or may not be connected with the huge fish behind the champion on the Cypriot seal.

Perseus' ties to fish and the sea are still more prominent in another feat, the slaying of the *kêtos* and the liberation of Andromeda. This event was set at Ioppe/Jaffa,⁷⁷ and there is a Canaanite myth that seems to be the direct antecedent of the Greek tale: Astarte is offered to Jam, the god of the sea.⁷⁸ One Greek vase painting of Perseus, Andromeda, and the *kêtos* (all indicated by inscriptions), the oldest of its kind that is known so far, has some odd singularities: Perseus is fighting with stones, and Andromeda, unfettered, is helping him. These very details turn out to be directly dependent on an oriental prototype, represented especially by one seal of Nimrud that has often been reproduced:⁷⁹ a god is assaulting a monstrous snake and two minor figures are assisting him. The iconographic correspondence, especially as regards the stance of the champion and the monster's head, is overwhelming. Yet for Mesopotamians, this clearly was a god, engaged in cosmogonic struggle, Marduk fighting Tiamat, according to the current interpretation; on another, quite similar seal he is carrying lightning in his hands;⁸⁰ for the Greeks, this is another heroic adventure in a context of initiation. There is a curious misinterpretation involved: on the Assyrian seal, the six dots in the sky behind the champion represent a constellation, as paralleled on many seals of the kind (usually these are 'seven stars'); the Greek artist, in a more realistic vein, took them for stones and placed the pile on the ground securely between the champion's feet. We thus find a strange interplay of contacts and separation: the story, the setting and the picture are 'oriental', but the parcel is untied, the strings are separated and made to enter novel combinations so that the result is anything but a mechanical replica of its antecedents.

The three-person combat scene, however, produced another strange offspring in Greek art: one of the oldest representations of the death of Agamemnon killed by Klytāimnestra and Aigisthos evidently reproduces the pattern. This is a clay plaque from Gortyn,⁸¹ a place notorious, in any case, for its strong Eastern connections during the archaic period; the very technique of using terracotta moulds was developed in Crete from Phoenician practices. The two champions, differing in their dress, have become male and female, just as in the Perseus version; the victim is seen *en face*, as ever, pressed down from both sides. Yet the victim is made a king by the addition of throne and sceptre, which Aigisthos is seen to grab; and the tricky garment used to suffocate Agamemnon has been added. This is a deliberate composition, meant to illustrate a famous Greek tale, but the iconographic outlines have been

borrowed from the oriental prototype; remodelling has not been a complete success. As to the contents, there appears to be no connection at all: Agamemnon is not a 'wild man'. Yet there may be unknown intermediates. It is striking that on some oriental exemplars, especially one that comes from the West Semitic region, Tell Keisan in Galilea,⁸² there is a fourth person added to the three-figure scene, a smaller female raising her hands in a gesture of mourning. For the Greeks, this will be Electra. This would suggest that even in this case of creative misunderstanding, there was not just one chance event that has to account for the transformation, one artist in Gortyn stumbling on an oriental model while trying to illustrate the tale of Agamemnon, but multiple channels of communication.

This essay has been neither systematic nor aimed at completeness, entering, as it does, a field where much is still to be explored. It has been restricted to connections with Mesopotamia, while similar observations of equal importance could be made with regard to Egypt; suffice it to mention Amphytrion.⁸³ The examples adduced here may serve to establish some more general tenets, however: 'Oriental' and Greek mythology were close enough in time, place and character to communicate with each other. More than casual parallels are evident; sparks jumped from one to the other repeatedly. There are fundamental similarities, for instance in the quest of the culture heroes, be it Ninurta or Herakles; there was diffusion of motifs such as the lion fight or the seven-headed snake; more profound influence came about with the adoption of cosmogonic myth; there was also an impact of iconography especially in the orientalising epoch, which however left room for many creative re-interpretations. It is not, or not yet, possible to isolate specific occasions or single routes of transfer. One should rather acknowledge a complex network of communication, with single achievements standing out against a common background, while the 'origins' of myth are not to be sought in East or West, Bronze Age or Neolithic, but in a more common human ancestry.⁸⁴

Figure 2.1: Seal Impression from Nuzi: Death of Humbaba. (See note 71, p. 39)



Figure 2.2: Shield Strap from Olympia: Perseus and Gorgo. (See note 73, p. 39)



Figure 2.3: Seal from Cyprus: Hero Fighting Monster. (See note 75, p. 39)



Figure 2.4: Seal from Assur: Death of Humbaba. (See note 71, [p. 39](#))



Figure 2.5: Clay Plaque from Gortyn: Death of Agamemnon. (See note 81, [p. 40](#))



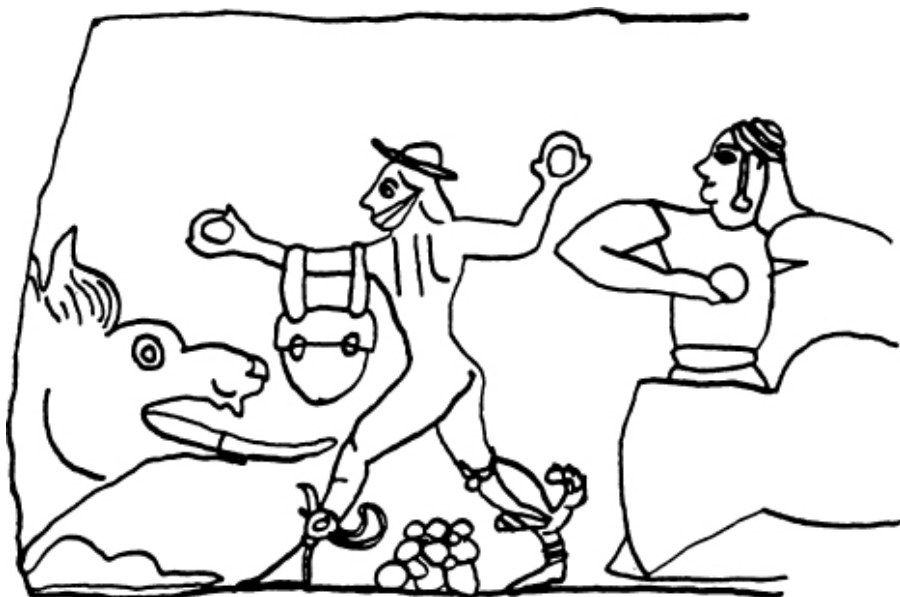
Figure 2.6: Seal from Tell Keisan: Death of Humbaba? (See note 82, p. 40)



Figure 2.7: Seal from Nimrud: God Fighting the Snake. (See note 79, p. 39f)



Figure 2.8: Corinthian Amphora: Perseus and the *kētos*. (See note 79, p. 39f)



Notes

1. On the concept of 'Elementargedanke' by Philip Wilhelm Adolf Bastian, see *Enzyklopädie des Märchens* I (Berlin, 1977) 1324–7.

2. W. Liungmann, *Traditionswanderungen Euphrat-Rhein*, 2 vols (Helsinki, 1937/8).

3. See G. S. Kirk, *Myth, Its Meaning and Functions in Ancient and Other Cultures* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, 1970) 1–41; Burkert, *S&H*, 1–34; F. Graf, *Griechische Mythologie* (Munich and Zurich, 1985) 7–14.

4. See especially the publications of the 'school of Paris': e.g. J.-P. Vernant, *Mythe et société en Grèce ancienne* (Paris, 1974); J.-P. Vernant and P. Vidal-Naquet, *Mythe et tragédie en Grèce ancienne* (Paris, 1972); M. Detienne, *Les jardins d'Adonis* (Paris, 1972) and *Dionysos*.

5. Burkert, *S&H*, 102–5.

6. *Ibid.*, 1–34.
7. V. Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale* (Bloomington, 1958; original edn, Leningrad, 1928); Burkert, *S&H*, 14–18.
8. C. Lévi-Strauss, *Mythologiques* I–IV (Paris, 1964–71); idem, ‘La geste d’Asdiwal’, in *Anthropologie structurale* deux (Paris, 1973) 175–233.
9. A. G. Dundes, *The Morphology of North American Indian Folktales* (Helsinki, 1964); idem, *Analytic Essays in Folklore* (The Hague, 1975) 61–72 (1st edn 1962).
10. S. Thomson, *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature* I–VI (Copenhagen, 1955–8).
11. See Burkert, *OE*.
12. C. H. Gordon, ‘Homer and the Bible’, *Hebrew Union Coll. Ann.*, 26 (1955) 43–108.
13. A recent attempt by F. Prinz in *RE* Suppl. 14 (1974) 137–96; the fullest account of the literary evidence remains L. Preller, *Griechische Mythologie*, 4th edn, ed. C. Robert, vol. II (Berlin, 1921) 422–675; for the archaeological evidence, see F. Brommer, *Herakles*, 4th edn (Darmstadt, 1979); see also Burkert, *S&H*, Ch. IV.
14. See A. Jeremias in W. H. Roscher (ed.), *Ausführliches Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie* (henceforth cited as *RML*) vol. II (Leipzig, 1890–7) 821–3 with reference to earlier suggestions; B. Schweitzer, *Herakles* (Tübingen, 1922) 133–41; after the discovery of the Tell Asmar seals (see below, n 35), G. R. Levy, ‘The oriental origin of Herakles’, *JHS*, 54 (1934) 40–53; H. Frankfort, *Cylinder Seals* (London, 1939) 121f; see Burkert, *S&H* 80–83.
15. J. van Dijk, *LUGAL UD ME-LÂM-bi NIR-GÁL, Le récit épique et didactique des travaux de Ninurta, du déluge et de la nouvelle création*, vol. I (Leiden, 1983). (The text is henceforth cited by the traditional incipit *Lugal-e*). A preliminary and sometimes misleading account had been given by S. N. Kramer, *Sumerian Mythology*, 2nd edn (New York, 1961) 78–92; see also T. Jacobsen, *The Treasures of Darkness* (New Haven, 1976) 129–31.
16. On Ningirsu and Ninurta see D. O. Edzard in H. W. Haussig (ed.), *Wörterbuch der Mythologie* I (Stuttgart, 1965) 111f, 114f; the twelve ‘trophies’ are enumerated in *Lugal-e* 129–33, cf. van Dijk 10–19.
17. Gudea A. XXV.24–XXVI.14; (outdated) transcription and translation in F. Thureau-Dangin, *Die sumerischen und akkadischen Königsinschriften* (Leipzig, 1907) 116–19; translation in A. Falkenstein, W.v. Soden, *Sumerische und Akkadische Hymnen und Gebete* (Zurich, 1953) 162f; new treatment in J. S. Cooper, ‘The Return of Ninurta to Nippur’, *Anal. Or.*, 52 (1978) 145f; only here the number 12 comes out. These beings are called ‘heroes killed’, XXVI. 15 (‘getötete Helden’ Falkenstein; ‘héros tués’ van Dijk 10).
18. See now Cooper, ‘The Return of Ninurta’, traditional incipit: *An-gim dimma*. The ‘trophies’ occur in lines 32–40 and 54–62. A comparative analysis of the lists of ‘trophies’ is given by Cooper 141–54; further comments by van Dijk 10–19.
19. This detail is in the text of *An-gim*.
20. See below, note 24.
21. For six of them van Dijk gives only a transcription instead of a translation.
22. See van Dijk 7–9.
23. Van Dijk 11, 17, with explicit reference to the cows of Geryon.
24. *Gilgamesh* VII.iii.48 = VIII.iii.7 (where the relevant sign is partially destroyed); R. C. Thompson, *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (Oxford, 1930) transcribes *maški kalbim* at the first, *maški labbim* at the second place (p. 45, 49); *labbim* also in W.v. Soden, *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch* 526 B, s.v. *labbu*. Sign no. 322 (Borger) can be read *kal* as well as *lab*. *Mašak kalbi* appears on a school tablet, *Materialien zum Sumerischen Lexikon*, vol. VII (ROME, 1959) 123, 20. For *kalbu*, ‘dog’, to denote ‘humility’, ‘disparagement of oneself’ see *Chicago Assyrian Dictionary*, vol. VIII (K) (Chicago, 1971) 72. The translations opt for ‘lion’: E. Ebeling in H. Gressmann (ed.), *Altorientalische Texte zum Alten Testament*, 2nd edn (Berlin, 1926) 165; A. Heidel, *The Gilgamesh Epic and Old Testament Parallels*, 2nd edn (Chicago, 1949) 59; *ANET*, 86; P. Labat, *Les Religions du Proche Orient* (Paris, 1970) 191, 197; A. Schott, *Das Gilgamesch-Epos*, neu herausgg. von W.v. Soden (Stuttgart, 1982) 67. The seals have many gods or heroes with club and bow. Very few seem to wear ‘animal skins’. One figure with ‘lion skin’ in D. Collon, *Catalogue of the Western Asiatic Seals in the British Museum: Cylinder Seals*, vol. II (London, 1982) no. 213.
25. *Lugal-e* 26–45; van Dijk 55–7.
26. H. G. Güterbock, *Kumarbi* (Zurich, 1946); *The Song of Ullikummi* (New Haven, 1952); E. Laroche, *Catalogue des textes Hittites* (Paris, 1971) no. 345; *ANET* 120–5; see n 46.
27. References for ‘Planet Ninurta’ in F. Goessmann, Planetarium Babylonicum. *Summerisches Lexikon*, ed. A. Deimel, vol. IV 2 (Rome, 1950) 53; cf. 124.
28. Hdt. 2.43f; bilingual inscriptions, e.g. P. M. Fraser, *Ann. Br. Sch. Athens*, 65 (1970) 31–6; *Tyrioi Herakleistai* on Hellenistic Delos, etc.; see R. Dussaud, ‘Melqart’, *Syria*, 25 (1946/8) 205–30; U. Täckholm,

–Tarsis, Tartessos und die Säulen des Herakles’, *Opuscula Romana*, 5 (1965) 142–200, esp. 187–9. D. van Berchem, ‘Sanctuaires d’Hercule-Melqart’, *Syria*, 44 (1967) 73–109, 307–38; C. Grottanelli, ‘Melqart e Sid fra Egitto, Libia e Sardegna’, *Riv. Studi Fenici*, 1 (1973) 153–64. The inscription from Pyrgi brought testimony for the ‘burial of the god’ (see J. A. Soggin, ‘La sepoltura della divinità’, *Riv. Stud. Or.*, 45 (1970) 242–52) corresponding to the ‘tomb’ (Clem. Rom. Rec. 10.24.2) and the ‘awakening’ of Melqart (Menandros, *FGrH* 783 F 1) at Tyre; for a representation of the ‘god in the flames’ at Pyrgi see M. Verzàr in *Mél. Ec. Fr. Rome*, 92 (1980) 62–78.

29. H. Goldman, ‘Sandon and Herakles’, *Hesperia*, Suppl. 8 (1949) 164–74; E. Laroche, ‘Un syncrétisme gréco-anatolien: Sandas = Héraklès’, in *Les Syncrétismes dans les religions grecque et romaine* (Paris, 1973) 103–14; S. Salvatori, ‘Il dio Santa-Sandon: Uno sguardo ai testi’, *Parola del Passato*, 30 (1975) 401–9; on the numismatic evidence see P. Chuvin, *J. des Sav.* (1981) 319–26.

30. H. Seyrig, ‘Antiquités Syriennes: Héraklès-Nergal’, *Syria*, 24 (1944/5) 62–80; W. Al-Salihi, ‘Hercules-Nergal at Hatra’, *Iraq*, 33 (1971) 113–15.

31. M. K. Schretter, *Alter Orient und Hellas* (Innsbruck, 1974) 170f following a suggestion of K. Oberhuber. Erragal (Irragal) as a name for the god of the underworld occurs in *Atrahasis* II.vii.51 = *Gilgamesh* XI. 101.

32. See Burkert, *S&H* 6; 14–16; 20.

33. Porph. ‘*Peri agalmatōn*’ fr. 8, p. 13, 3 Bidez; cf. O. Gruppe in *RE* Suppl. 3 (1911) 1104. Number 12 of the zodiacal signs has a complicated prehistory and is not established before the sixth century; see R. Böker in *RE* 10A (1972) 522–39 s.v. *Zodiakos*.

34. See Burkert, *S&H*, Ch. IV.

35. (1) Predynastic seal from Tell Asmar: *Oriental Institute Communications 17: Iraq Excavations 1932–1933* (Chicago, 1934) 54, fig. 50; G. R. Levy, *JHS*, 54 (1934) 40; H. Frankfort, *Stratified Cylinder Seals from the Diyala Region* (Chicago, 1955) no. 497; Burkert, *S&H* 82; P. Amiet, *La Glyptique Mésopotamienne archaïque*, 2nd edn (Paris, 1980), no. 1393; (2) Predynastic shell plaque: *ANEP*, no. 671; Amiet, no. 1394; (3) Sargonic seal from Tell Asmar: *Or. Inst. Comm.*, 17, 49, fig. 43; *JHS*, 54, pl. 2; Frankfort, *Strat. Cyl. Seals*, no. 478; R. M. Boehmer, *Die Entwicklung der Glyptik während der Akkad-Zeit* (Berlin, 1965), no. 292; *ANEP*, no. 691; Amiet, no. 1492; (4) Sumerian macehead in Copenhagen: H. Frankfort, *Anal. Or.*, 12 (1935) 105–8, fig. 1–4; O. Keel, *Wirkmächtige Siegeszeichen im Alten Testament* (Fribourg, 1974) fig. 40.

(1)–(3) are combat scenes; (4) has the snake above ‘Imdugud’ birds; (1) and (4) show coiled snakes, (2) and (3) four-footed dragons. From the back of the creature at (2) and (3) there rise vertical lines which have been interpreted as either ‘tails’ (Boehmer, 52) or ‘flames’ (Frankfort, *Or. Inst. Comm.*, 17, 54; idem, *Cylinder Seals* (1939) 122); they recur in the Late Hittite relief from Malatya, showing gods fighting with the (one-headed?) snake, E. Akurgal, *Die Kunst der Hethiter* (Munich, 1961) fig. 104; *ANEP*, no. 670.

36. The ‘Converse Tablet’ ed. W. Lambert in *Near Eastern Studies in Honor of W. F. Albright* (Baltimore, 1971) 335–53; 336f; cf. Cooper, ‘The Return of Ninurta’, 147.

37. M. Dietrich, O. Loretz and J. Sanmartin, *Die keilalphabetischen Texte aus Ugarit* (Kevelaer, 1976) no. 1.5 I 27–30 (*ANET* p. 138); *Isaiah* 27, 1; L. R. Fisher (ed.), *Ras Shamra Parallels* (Rome, 1972) I 33–6, no. 25.

38. K. Fittschen, *Untersuchungen zum Beginn der Sagendarstellungen bei den Griechen* (Berlin, 1969) 147f; Brommer, *Herakles*, 13, pl. 8; Burkert, *S&H* 78,2; 81. Two champions fighting a huge two-headed (?) snake appear on a white-painted plate from Cyprus, eleventh century: V. Karageorghis, *Comptes-rendus de l’Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres* (1980) 28, fig. 7; there are no clear iconographic correlations to Eastern or Western types.

39. Burkert, *S&H* 80f with n 3.

40. Fittschen, *Untersuchungen* 84–8; Burkert, *OE* 22f.

41. For Peisandros, see G. L. Huxley, *Greek Epic Poetry from Eumelos to Panyassis* (London, 1969) 100–5. Brommer, *Herakles* 53–63; 82.

42. H. G. Güterbock, *Kumarbi, Mythen von churritischen Kronos* (Zurich, 1946) with the texts ‘Kingship in Heaven’ (Laroche, *Catalogue*, no. 344; *ANET* 120f) and ‘Ullikummi’ (see above, n 26). The discovery had been signalled by E. Forrer in *Mélanges F. Cumont* (Brussels, 1936) 687–713, cf. F. Dornseiff in *L’Antiquité classique*, 6(1937) 231–58; A. Lesky, *Gesammelte Schriften* (Bern, 1966) 356–71 (1st edn, 1950); cf. A. Heubeck, ‘Mythologische Vorstellungen des Alten Orients im archaischen Griechentum’, *Gymnasium*, 62 (1955) 508–25; P. Walcot, *Hesiod and the Near East* (Cardiff, 1966); M. L. West, *Hesiod Theogony* (Oxford, 1966).

43. M. P. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion*, 3rd edn, vol. I (Munich, 1967) 515f. See also Kirk, *Myth*, 214–20; Burkert, *S&H* 20–2.

44. E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley, 1951) 61.

45. Transmission via Late Hittites and/or Syria was Heubeck’s thesis; cf. Burkert, *OE*, passim. Walcot,

Hesiod, 127–9 and West, *Theogony*, 28f argued for transmission in the Mycenaean epoch. Survival of the Hittite Illuyankas myth into late Hittite times is usually inferred from the Malatya relief; see above, n 35.

46. See above n 26; on Caucasian parallels, W. Burkert, 'Von Ullikummi zum Kaukasus: Die Felsgeburt des Unholds', *Würzb. Jahrb. N.F.*, 5 (1979) 253–61.

47. ANET 123; Apollod. 1 (41) 6.3.7. The *Iliad* has Typhoeus *en Arimois* (2.783; cf. Hes. *Theog.* 304), which might be the first Greek reference to 'Aramaean'. On Typhoeus in Hes. *Theog.* 820–80, see West, *Theogony*.

48. Laroche, *Catalogue*, no. 321; ANET 125f; cf. Burkert, *S&H* 7–10. An independent variant of the myth still recurs in Nonnos 1.154–62, cf. M. Rocchi, *Studi Micenei ed Egeo-Anatolici*, 21 (1980) 353–75.

49. Hes. *Theog.* 824–6; *speirai* Apollod. 1 (42) 6.3.8; Chalcidian Hydria in Munich: K. Schefold, *Frühgriechische Sagenbilder* (Munich, 1964) pl. 66.

50. *Baal Šapuna* 'Lord of the North', is attested at Ugarit and in the treaty of Esarhaddon with Tyre (ANET 534); cf. *Exodus* 14.2; *š* i.e. *šad* will appear as *t* in Aramaean, cf. *Šor* (Ugaritic, Hebrew) = *Tyros*. See O. Eissfeldt, *Baal Zaphon, Zeus Kasios und der Durchzug der Israeliten durchs Meer* (Halle, 1932); E. Honigsmann in *RE* 4A (1932) 1576f; F. Vian in *Éléments orientaux dans la religion grecque ancienne* (Paris, 1960) 26–8.

51. Ullikummi iii-c, ANET 125.

52. Text in *FGrH* 790; O. Eissfeldt repeatedly advocated the authenticity of the 'Sanchuniaton' tradition: *Ras Schamra und Sanchuniaton* (Halle, 1939) 75–95; idem, 'Taaautos und Sanchuniaton', *Sitzungsber. Berlin* (1952), 1. The new commentary by A. I. Baumgarten, *The Phoenician History of Philo of Byblos* (Leiden, 1981) concludes that Philo is better explained in non-Ugaritic terms. See also J. Ebach, *Weltentstehung und Kulturentwicklung bei Philo von Byblos* (Stuttgart, 1979).

53. F. M. Cornford, *Principium Sapientiae* (Cambridge, 1952), esp. 'Cosmogonical Myth and Ritual', 225–38, and 'The Hymn to Marduk and the Hymn to Zeus', 239–49. This book was edited posthumously; the chapters had been written before the Kumarbi discovery; see E. R. Dodds's note, p. 249.

54. New edition of the cuneiform text: W. G. Lambert and S. B. Parker, *Enuma Eliš* (Oxford, 1967); transcription of I–IV in G. Steiner, *Der Sukzessionsmythos in Hesiod's 'Theogonie' und ihren orientalischen Parallelen* (Diss., Hamburg, 1959); ANET 60–72; A. Heidel, *The Babylonian Genesis* (Chicago, 1942; 2nd edn 1951).

55. See van Dijk, 9f. Some other Babylonian creation stories are included in Heidel, *Babylonian Genesis*, 61–81. A further Sumerian text in J. van Dijk, 'Existe-t-il un "Poème de la Création" sumérien?', in *Cuneiform Studies in Honor of S. N. Kramer*, ed. B. L. Eichler (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1976) 125–133.

56. The whole text has become available, though not in a final form, in *ZPE*, 47 (1982). Seven columns had been edited by S. G. Kapsomenos, *Deltion*, 19 (1964) 17–25; cf. W. Burkert, 'Orpheus und die Vorsokratiker', *Antike und Abendland*, 14 (1968) 93–114. See now M. L. West, *The Orphic Poems* (Oxford, 1983) 68–115.

57. *ὅς μὲν ἔρεξεν* 10.5; the author etymologises Kronos from *κρούειν* as 'things being clashed together' were separated, and the sun was fixed in the middle between earth and sky, col. 10/11.

αἰδοῖον κα[τ]έπινεν, ὃς αἰθέρα

ἔκθορε πρῶτος 9.4. πρωτογόνου βασιλέως αἰδοίου

12.3. That

ἔκθορεῖν

is used as a transitive verb is clear

from 10.1

ἔκθορῃ τὸν λαμπρότατόν τε [καὶ] λευκό[τ]ατον

paraphrasing

αἰθέρα ἔκθορε; cf. θρώσκων

Aesch. fr. 15 Radt = 133 Mette. West, *Orphic Poems*, 85f,

followed by J. S. Rusten, *HSCP*, 89 (1985) 125f, takes *αἰδοῖον* as an adjective, combining ingeniously 4.5 with 9.4, and thus makes the Kumarbi motif disappear. This is to impute to the commentator a gross misunderstanding of the Greek text he had before his eyes in a complete copy; he twice makes

δαίμονα [χυδρ]όν

the object of *ἔλαβεν*

(5.4; 4.8), not of *κατέπινε* West (p. 86) also

inserts Phanes Protoponos before Uranos, in accordance with the Orphic Rhapsodies, but without support

in the Derveni text. 10.6

Οὐρανός Εὐφρονίδης, ὃς πρῶτιστος βασιλεύσεν

must be identified with the king.

πρωτόγονος βασιλεύς

12.3, or else Uranos would not be the 'first'

58. The four kingdoms appear in the crucial testimony for Orphic anthropogony, *Orphicorum Fragmenta* 220 Kern = Olympiod. In *Phaed.* p. 41f Westerink, in accordance with the Derveni evidence. See also *OE* 116f.

59. Plato refers to *Iliad* 14.201 = 302 in *Crat.* 402 ab, *Thi*, 152e, 180cd, as does Arist. *Met.* 983 b27.

Eudemus fr. 150 Wehrli, preserved by Damaskios, *De primis principiis* I 319–21 Ruelle, made a systematic collection of cosmogonic myths.

60. O. Gigon, *Der Ursprung der griechischen Philosophie von Hesiod bis Parmenides* (Basle, 1945). For the continuity from mythical to Presocratic cosmogony see also U. Hölscher, 'Anaximander und der Anfang der Philosophie', in *Anfängliches Fragen* (Göttingen, 1968) 9–89 (1st edn 1953).

61. S. H. Hooke, *Myth and Ritual* (Oxford, 1933). For the ritual of the Babylonian New Year's Festival, see *ANET* 331–4, with mentions of the recital of *Enuma elish*.

62. 'What follows is the cult legend of the Purulli Festival', *ANET* 125. For *Lugal-e*, see above, n 15.

63. T. H. Gaster, *Thespis. Ritual, Myth, and Drama in the Ancient Near East*, 2nd edn (Garden City, 1961).

64. L. Deubner, *Attische Feste* (Berlin, 1932) 152–5. Cf. Burkert, *GR*, 227–33; Versnel, this volume, [Ch. 7](#).

65. See Burkert, *OE*, 115f.

66. The investigation of 'conduits' and 'multi-conduit-transmission' goes back to Linda Dégh, see *Enzyklopädie des Märchens* III (Berlin, 1981) 124–6.

67. See E. Vermeule and V. Karageorghis, *Mycenaean Pictorial Vase Painting* (Cambridge, 1982).

68. See Schefold, *Sagenbilder*; Pittschen, *Untersuchungen*.

69. K. S. Brown, *The Question of Near Eastern Textile Decoration of the Early First Millenium B.C. as a Source for Greek Vase Painting of the Orientalizing Style* (Diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1980) thinks this influence has been rather overrated.

70. An indispensable older work is W. H. Ward, *The Seal Cylinders of Western Asia* (Washington, 1910); still useful is O. Weber, *Altorientalische Siegelbilder* (Leipzig, 1920); Frankfort, *Cylinder Seals*; A. Moortgat, *Vorderasiatische Rollsiegel* (Berlin, 1940; 2nd edn 1966). Recent interest has concentrated on the early epoch: Boehmer, *Entwicklung*; Amiet, *La Glyptique Mésopotamienne archaïque*; D. Collon, *Catalogue of the Western Asiatic Seals in the British Museum: Cylinder Seals II* (London, 1982); a good survey with bibliography: R. M. Boehmer in *Der alte Orient. Propyläen Kunstgeschichte* XIV, ed. W. Orthmann (Berlin, 1975) 336–63.

71. D. Opitz, 'Der Tod des Humbaba', *Archiv für Orientforschung*, 5 (1928/9) 207–13; P. Calmeyer, 'Reliefbronzen in babylonischem Stil', *Abh. Bay. Ak. der Wiss., N.F.*, 73 (1973) 44f; 165–9; C. Wilcke, *Reall. der Assyriologie* IV (Berlin, 1975) 530–5 s.v. *Huwawa*; E. Haevernick and P. Calmeyer, *Arch. Mitt. Iran*, N.F. 9(1976) 15–18. For late Hittite reliefs at Tell Halaf, Karkemish, Karatepe, see H. Frankfort, *The Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient* (London, 1963) pl. 159 C; H. J. Kantor, *JNES*, 21 (1962) 114f. The composition seems to be misunderstood or reinterpreted in Phoenician art, R. D. Barnett, *Iraq*, 2 (1935) 202f, but a fine example of the normal type is a bowl from Nimrud, *ibid.* 205 = Vian, *Eléments orientaux* (above, n 50) pl. IVb. For a seal from Galilea see below, n 82. See [Figure 2.1](#), this volume: Seal impression from Nuzi, *Ann. Am. Sch. Oriental Res.*, 24 (1944/5) 60 and pl. 37, 728; *JNES*, 21 (1962) 115; [Figure 2.4](#), this volume: Seal from Assur, Berlin 4215, eighth century AD: D. Opitz, *Arch. f. Orientforsch.*, 5 (1928/9) pl. XI 2; *AJA*, 38 (1934) 352; Moortgat, *Vorderas. Rollsiegel*, no. 608 (date: p. 67f); Calmeyer, 'Reliefbronzen', 166, fig. 124.

72. Wilcke, s.v. *Huwawa*, 534. See also V. K. Afanasyeva, 'Gilgameš and Enkidu in Glyptic Art and in the Epic', *Klio*, 53 (1970) 59–75.

73. C. Hopkins, 'Assyrian Elements in the Perseus-Gorgon-Story', *AJA*, 38 (1934) 341–58; B. Goldman, 'The Asiatic Ancestry of the Greek Gorgon', *Berytus*, 14 (1961) 1–23; H. J. Kantor, 'A Bronze Plaque with Relief Decoration from Tell Tainat', *JNES*, 21 (1962) 93–117; Burkert, *OE*, 81–4. [Figure 2.2](#), this volume, is a shield strap from Olympia, E. Kunze, *Olympische Forschungen* II (Berlin, 1950) pl. 57; Kantor 115.

74. T. G. Karayorga, *Gorgeie Kephale* (Athens, 1970); J. Floren, *Studien zur Typologie des Gorgoneion* (Munich, 1977); Burkert, *OE*, 81–4, also for relations to Lamashtu and Pazuzu.

75. M. Ohnefalsch-Richter, *Kypros, the Bible, and Homer* (London, 1893) pl. 31, 16 cf. [p. 208](#); A. de Ridder, *BCH*, 22 (1898) 452 fig. 4; *RML* III (1902–9) 2032, art. 'Perseus'; Ward, *Cylinder Seals*, no. 643c [p. 21](#) If; Weber, *Siegelbilder*, no. 269; *AJA*, 38 (1934) 351; *Berytus*, 14 (1961) 22; P. Amiet, *Orientalia*, 45 (1976) 27 with reference to Ugaritic mythology (26); Burkert, *OE* 83, 22; see [Figure 2.3](#), this volume. B. Brentjes, *Alte Siegelkunst des Vordenen Orients* (Leipzig, 1983) 165, 203, has a new drawing, the inventory number VA 2145, and the information – contrary to Ohnefalsch-Richter – 'in Bagdad gekauft'. He simply calls the picture 'Greek'.

76. See Burkert, *HN* 209f.

77. Strabon 16 p. 759; Konon *FGrH* 26 F 1, 40; *los. Bell. Iud.* 3.420; Paus. 4.35.9. Andomeda's father Cepheus is son of Belos as early as Hdt. 7.61; Eur. fr. 881.

78. The 'Astarte Papyrus', a heavily mutilated Egyptian text with Canaanite names, *ANET* 17f.

79. See [Figure 2.7](#), this volume: Neo-Assyrian Seal, 'Williams Cylinder' (Pierpont Morgan Collection no. 688, New York): Ward, *Seal Cylinders* 201f, no. 578; A. Jeremias, *Handbuch der altorientalischen*

Geisteskultur, 2nd edn (Berlin, 1929) 431, fig. 239a. Weber, *Altor. Siegelbilder*, no. 347; Kramer, *Sumerian Mythology* pl. XIX 2; M. L. West, *Early Greek Philosophy and the Orient* (Oxford, 1971) pl. IIa; P. Amiet, *Syria*, 42 (1965) 245. For the interpretation 'Marduk fighting Tiamat' see Ward 201f; he also states that the six 'stones' seem to be derived iconographically from the seven dots = seven stars often represented on seals. [Figure 2.8](#), this volume: Late Corinthian Amphora, Berlin; RML III 2047; Schefold, *Sagenbilder* pl. 45; LIMC 'Andromeda' no. 1 (where the singularities mentioned in the text are set forth).

80. Ward. no. 579; Weber no. 348; Kramer pl. XIX 1.

81. LIMC 'Agamemnon', no. 91, from Gortyn (Mus. Iraklion), 675/50 AD; Schefold, *Sagenbilder* pl. 33; M. I. Davies, *BCH*, 93 (1969) 228, fig. 9–10. See [Figure 2.5](#), this volume. Davies especially deals with a Cretan seal (about 700 AD; LIMC, Agamemnon no. 94); this has only two persons and thus does not belong directly to the type treated here.

82. O. Keel, in J. Briand and J. B. Humbert (eds), *Tell Keisan (1971–76), une cité phénicienne en Galilée* (Fribourg, 1980) 276f, pl. 89,17; 136, 17. See [Figure 2.6](#), this volume. Cf. the Assyrian Seal, Ward, *Seal Cylinders*, 211, fig. 642; Hopkins, 'Assyrian Elements', 354, fig. 12.

83. The begetting of the Pharaoh by Amun is represented in Egyptian temples by a pictorial cycle, first at Der-el-Bahri (Hatchepsut, 1488–1467) and Luxor (Amenophis III, 1397–1360); see H. Brunner, *Die Geburt des Gottkönigs* (Wiesbaden, 1964). J. Assmann, 'Die Zeugung des Sohns', in J. Assmann, W. Burkert and F. Stolz, *Funktionen und Leistungen des Mythos* (Fribourg, 1982) 13–61; that the Amphitryon story is derived from there, with the detail that Toth = Hermes should accompany Amun = Zeus on his amorous ways, has been stated repeatedly: A. Wiedemann, *Herodots zweites Buch* (Leipzig, 1890) 268; Brunner 214; W. Burkert, *MH*, 22 (1965) 168f; S. Morenz, 'Die Geburt des ägyptischen Gottkönigs', *Forschungen und Fortschritte*, 40 (1966) 366–71; R. Merkelbach, *Die Quellen des Alexanderromans*, 2nd edn (Munich, 1977) 77–82. The decisive motif, the god assuming the shape of the king, does not appear in the oldest Greek sources, *Od*, 11.266–8, and Hes. fr. 195 = *Aspis* 1–56, but may be presupposed on the chest of Kypselos (Zeus as a 'man wearing a chiton': Paus. 5.18.3); see also Pherekydes *FGrH* 3 F 13; Charon *FGrH* 262 F 2.

84. My thanks to Sarah Johnston for correcting the English style of this essay – responsibility for its final form, though, remains with me – and to Cornelius Burkert for his drawings.

Oedipus and the Greek Oedipus Complex

Jan Bremmer

Oedipus is one of the few figures of Greek mythology whose name is still a household word. His fate has inspired playwrights, librettists, film-makers,¹ and attracted the attention of Freud and Lévi-Strauss, the founding fathers of psychoanalysis and structuralist anthropology respectively (cf. below). In spite of the enormous interest, a satisfactory interpretation of the myth has still not been arrived at. The following inquiry does not pretend to present the last word about Oedipus, but it hopes to show that historical, sociological and structuralist approaches can all cast light on one and the same myth – and sometimes have to be employed simultaneously. Only an eclectic analysis makes the best use of the riches of the mythological tradition.

The Oedipus myth has been discussed in various ways. Older scholars tried above all to recover the myth's earliest stages. They compared its various versions in epic, tragedy and later Greek mythography, and in this way they were able to demonstrate that in the course of time important changes had occurred. For example, originally Delphi was absent from the story, and Oedipus remarried after his wife's death. Only in classical times did the poets' interest shift from the family to the individual; in archaic Greece an *Antigone* was unthinkable.²

The most recent, structuralist approach has proceeded regardless of these chronological considerations. In a noteworthy analysis, Claude Lévi-Strauss compared the relationship between Kadmos and his sister Europa to Antigone's attitude to Polynices' corpse, and concluded that these incidents have as a common feature the overrating of blood relations. In addition, he drew far-reaching conclusions from the physical defects which are suggested, according to him, by the names of Oedipus, 'Swollen foot', his father Laios, 'Left-sided', and his grandfather Labdacus, 'Lame'. However, it has to be objected that Antigone is only a post-Homeric arrival in the Oedipus myth, and the name Laios (*Láios*) does not derive from the Greek word *laiós*, 'left'. Historical and linguistic knowledge remains indispensable, even in a structuralist approach. Lévi-Strauss's procedure is of course perfectly

understandable from his experience with the non-literate peoples of Latin America; it is usually impossible to distinguish between historical layers in his own chosen area. In Greek mythology, on the contrary, such a distinction is often possible, and a chronological determination of the various motifs must therefore always be attempted.³

Although I shall incorporate the chronological perspectives of the older scholars and shall make use of structuralist methods, I shall be more indebted to scholars who followed a rather different approach, namely the great Russian folklorist Propp and the Belgian Marie Delcourt.⁴ Both scholars analysed the myth by studying the meaning of all of its individual motifs. They thought they could detect an initiatory pattern in the myth, but failed to integrate Oedipus' incest convincingly into this solution. Yet in principle their approach seems sound – only by studying all the individual motifs against the background of a unifying pattern can a myth as a whole be properly evaluated. However, the popularity of the Oedipus theme means that the scope of the inquiry has to be delimited. Following Lévi-Strauss's methodological guideline that a myth should be studied with reference to its own ethnographical context,⁵ I shall analyse the Oedipus myth as much as possible within the context of the archaic and classical age. In practice, this means that the sources can be restricted to those versions which were known to the tragedians of the fifth century;⁶ versions which have become rationalised or adapted to the more bourgeois climate of Hellenistic times need not be taken into consideration.⁷ This chapter, then, will concentrate on two aspects of the myth. First, successive episodes of Oedipus' life will be looked at, with particular reference to the parricide and incest, and secondly, an attempt will be made to locate the Greek Oedipus complex in a specific historical setting.

1. Oedipus

How did it all begin? In the fifth century, various versions of the myth's early history were current. In Aeschylus' *Seven against Thebes* the Delphic oracle warns the Theban king Laios that he will only save the city if he dies childless. In Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* the oracle proclaims that the newborn son will kill his father, but in Euripides' *Phoenissae* the oracle takes place before Oedipus' birth. This variation can hardly be due to chance. The very beginning of the myth was an area where the poets could freely exercise their ingenuity without altering the traditional plot of the myth. Both oracle and prophecy will not have been introduced into the myth before the eighth century, since that was when Delphi first rose to fame and the Greek polis came into existence. The oracle probably replaced a seer: a poet could hardly get Oedipus away from Thebes and ignorant of his true parentage without a prophecy (however given). Even if there is an answer to this problem for the pre-history of the myth, for the classical period the presence of the oracle is most

important because it introduces such motifs as human v. divine intelligence, vain attempts to escape from oracles, limitations of human understanding and fate – motifs which evidently fascinated the classical audience.⁸

In order to forestall the outcome of the oracle, King Laios had Oedipus exposed. The myth indicates two locations of the exposure which are not as different as they might appear at first sight. According to the first version, Oedipus was exposed on Mt Cithaeron and found by a shepherd from Sicyon. The tradition of Oedipus' discovery near Thebes by a Sicyonian shepherd is an interesting glimpse into the sparsely documented activities of Greek herdsmen. Undoubtedly, his presence is a nice example of transhumance – the system by which herds graze in the mountains in the summer, and in the valleys during the winter. A detailed exposition of the myth may well have elaborated the difficulties experienced by the shepherds in bringing the foundling home!⁹ According to the second version, Oedipus was put in a chest and thrown into the sea. Fortunately, he was rescued by the queen of Corinth (or Sicyon) who was doing her laundry at the seashore. Washing clothes may not seem a very royal activity, but in the *Odyssey* Nausicaa too departs on a washing expedition; the motif will predate the Classical Age when the enclosure of women was too strict to allow such activities.¹⁰

Both versions employ common mythological motifs. Paris was exposed on Mt Ida and rescued by a shepherd, and Perseus was exposed at sea in a chest. Whereas older scholars felt the need to determine the priority of one of the two versions, the structuralist will observe that sea and mountains are both in opposition to the fertile land around the polis. Evil beings and polluted objects were carried to the mountains or cast into the sea, and a Greek curse tersely says: 'into the mountains or into the sea'. Both areas, then, contain the same message: the child was exposed on a spot from which no escape was possible.¹¹

Oedipus was not the only foundling to survive. We need only think of other famous persons such as Sargon, Cyrus, Perseus, Romulus and Remus, and Pope Gregory in order to realise that this motif is very widespread.¹² All these foundlings have in common that they grow up to become important worldly or spiritual leaders. Various scholars have suggested that the exposure reflects a ritual theme such as the rites of initiation, or, as in the case of Oedipus, the punishment for parricide (i.e. to be drowned in a bag).¹³ None of these explanations is really convincing. It is more natural to see in the exposure a narrative ploy: the important position of the hero in later life within the community is thrown into greater relief by his earlier removal from that community.¹⁴ Given its knowledge of the exposure motif in the case of Perseus and other heroes, a Greek audience unfamiliar with the myth probably will have interpreted Oedipus' exposure in an analogous way until it dawned upon them that in this particular case the exposure prepared the way for terrible things to come.

When Oedipus was exposed, his feet were mutilated. Vladimir Propp (above,

note 4) has pointed out that in many legends the foundling is symbolically killed. This could also be the explanation for Oedipus' mutilation – the wounded feet meant a *de facto* death. On the other hand, there is something odd about this motif. After all, Oedipus was a baby: how could anyone have expected that he would run away? The role of the mutilation is actually secondary in the myth. It does not occur in those versions where Oedipus is exposed at sea, nor does Sophocles let his hero limp in the *Oedipus Rex*.¹⁵ And yet, this subsidiary motif has exercised an enormous influence on modern interpretations. According to their various orientations, scholars have explained it as a sign of autochthony, a defect of communication, the reverse of good kingship or the overcoming of fear of castration.¹⁶ All these explanations misjudge the typical Greek way of playing with names. Popular etymologies always confirm the values already ascribed to the bearer of a name; they do not produce these values. In other words, the etymological interpretation is always secondary, and cannot be used as the main key in decoding the myth.¹⁷

After the shepherds had found Oedipus, they brought him to the court of King Polybus. The king's name is fixed in all versions of the tradition, but the name of his wife varies; she is called Merope, Periboia, Medusa or Antiochis. Evidently, changing women's names was one of the poetic means of giving a story a new look.¹⁸ Even though the royal couple pretended that Oedipus was their own son, his education at another court can hardly be separated from fosterage, the initiatory custom according to which Greek and other Indo-European aristocratic children were raised at a court or family different from their own. This once widespread custom lasted until the later Middle Ages, and in England became transformed into the institution of the public school.¹⁹ The exposure myths could easily incorporate initiatory motifs, since boys usually had to spend some time away from home during their rites of puberty; Cyrus' and Romulus and Remus' growing up among their contemporaries also reflects Persian and Roman rites of initiation. It was normal for the young aristocrat to return home when he had grown up in order to pass through the final puberty rites. Similarly, Oedipus left the court when he had reached adulthood.²⁰

We need not analyse the reasons why Oedipus left his foster parents, or why Laios left Thebes in order to consult the Delphic oracle. Motivations were typically a territory where poets could use their imagination. It is far more interesting to inquire why Oedipus killed his father at a triple crossroads. Carl Robert spent much effort on localising the scene of the crime, and even published photographs of it,²¹ but it seems more important to observe that the Greeks considered a triple crossroads an ominous spot. It was the place where ghostly Hecate was worshipped, where Plato wants corpses of parricides to be stoned, and where in Late Antiquity the poet Nonnus still has women commit murders.²² Evidently, mythopoeic imagination did not choose its scenery at random but deliberately.

After the murder of his father, Oedipus continued his journey to Thebes

where he solved the Sphinx's riddle. A full text of the riddle only emerges in the fourth century:

There walks on land a creature of two feet, of four feet, and of three; it has one voice, but sole among animals that grow on land or in the sea, it can change its nature; nay, when it walks propped on most feet, then is the speed of its limbs less than it has ever been before.

Versions of the riddle have been collected in other parts of the world, but the Greek version, unlike that of other peoples, never mentions the various stages of life as morning, afternoon and evening.²³ The earliest sources locate the monster in the mountains where it usually kills Theban youths; later sources dramatise the situation by mentioning the ecclesia or acropolis of Thebes.²⁴ Monsters naturally belong in the wild, but it may seem curious that in literature and iconography the Sphinx is virtually always represented as a girl, although a vase with an onanising Sphinx does exist. The monster's female sex fits in well with the Greek tendency to represent monsters as female, in particular as girls and/or old women, as is illustrated by the cases of the Medusa, Gorgo, Chimaera, Lamia, the Sirens, Erinyes, Scylla and Charybdis. Whereas modern fiction likes to represent the ultimate danger as coming from outer space, male Greek imagination always thought of the opposite sex.²⁵

It has recently been argued that the episode with the Sphinx is a later addition to the Oedipus story, since there is no unanimity regarding the sender – Hera, Ares and Dionysos are mentioned; moreover, the episode is absent from similar folktales. This argument is unacceptable. First, Hesiod (*Th.* 326) knows of the Sphinx as a threat to the Thebans, and parts of the riddle's text already appear on a newly published sixth-century vase; allusions to it are to be found in early fifth-century literature. This chronological evidence would in itself dispose of the claim that the Sphinx is a later addition. Secondly, motivation is variable in poetic tradition, as we saw before. Thirdly, the comparison with other folktales forces the Sphinx episode into the shackles of a primeval version which is non-existent in the historical tradition but has to be reconstructed from much later versions. There is no reason, then, to exclude the Sphinx episode from the original myth.²⁶

By freeing the Thebans from the Sphinx, Oedipus acquired the throne and the hand of the queen. The *Odyssey* version of the Oedipus myth, the oldest version that exists, stresses the role of Epikaste (Jocaste) in this marriage: 'she who had married her son' (11.273). Similarly, the suitors of Penelope were waiting to see whom she would choose to marry. These myths presuppose a matrimonial system in which gaining the hand of the queen-widow implies occupation of the throne. The same system could be found elsewhere. Herodotus relates the gripping story of Gyges and the wife of the Lydian king Candaules; another Lydian king was also succeeded by a subordinate who married the adulterous queen. In Persia, the Magus Smerdis married Cambyses' widow Atossa, who was incorporated into Darius' harem after

Smerdis' death, and – a very late example – in the eleventh century, the Scandinavian Knut married the widow of Ethelred, the defeated English king.²⁷

If Oedipus' wedding had been the end of the myth, the result of the analysis would have been obvious. In the 1930s, Louis Gernet had already compared Oedipus' confrontation with the Sphinx with ordeals of other heroes such as Theseus, Iamos and Pelops, and interpreted these tests as an 'initiation royale'. The pioneer of the study of Greek initiatory rites, Jeanmaire, also recognised in this part of the myth 'le thème d'avènement', but at the same time he wondered about the link with incest and parricide. Could these latter two motifs really be connected with the theme of initiation?²⁸

There can be no doubt, in fact, that parricide can be brought into the orbit of puberty rites, as is illustrated by the Theseus myth. Scholars have long recognised that the Attic version of the myth reflects an initiatory scenario: the prince who is educated away from home defeats the monstrous Minotaur and returns home to become king. In the case of Theseus, the king is not straightforwardly murdered, but his suicide is caused by Theseus forgetting to change the sails. In other words, in this particular case myth has mitigated parricide. In its undiluted form, the crime occurs in a Bororo myth. A boy named Geriguiguiatugo raped his mother and was therefore abandoned by his father. After the performance of a series of hunting feats, he returned, provided his tribe with fire and killed his father. The rape of his mother symbolises separation from the world of women. The killing of his father expresses a 'social principle of universal validity: "for society to go on, sons must destroy (replace) their fathers"'. Walter Burkert has wisely pointed to the initiatory pattern of this Bororo myth. Lévi-Strauss, on the other hand, mentions the connection of the myth with initiation but fails to note its importance for the interpretation of the very myth which constitutes the starting point of his analysis of South American mythology.²⁹

We can systematise these myths as follows:

~~Oedipus~~
Geriguiguiatugo
fosterage
~~performing feats~~ monster
~~parricide~~ of monster
~~king~~ hero

Up to this point, these myths display a comparable structure: a young man performs an impressive feat, defeats a monster, kills his father (or is the cause of his death) and becomes king (or culture hero). The order of motifs 2 and 3 is different in the case of Oedipus and Theseus, but this difference does not seem to be of any particular interest. Propp attached great value to the fixed order of the motifs in a given folktale, but his point of view is hardly supported by Greek myths and their plots.³⁰ Yet, however comparable these myths are up

till this point, the problem remains of how Oedipus' incest can be fitted into this scheme. Is an interpretation which takes ritual as the starting point of the myth perhaps more satisfactory?

Around the beginning of this century an explanation of the myth was looked for in Oedipus' connection with Demeter at the level of cult. It was typical of historians of Greek religion that they tried to regain firm ground by concentrating on ritual instead of myth after the excesses of Max Müller and Usener. And indeed, a local historian Lysimachos mentions a cult of Oedipus and his grave in the sanctuary of Demeter in Boeotian Eteonos. Carl Robert, recently followed by Burkert, saw in this cult the origin of Oedipus' marriage, since Demeter was the Greek mother *par excellence*. However, the burial in Demeter's sanctuary does not make Oedipus a son of the goddess. Moreover, the assumption implies that at a very early stage the Boeotians of Eteonos already worshipped an unknown hero who had nothing to do with Oedipus, and who, for unknown reasons, was transferred to Thebes by an unknown poet; in addition, this solution leaves the link with parricide totally unexplained. It seems rather less complicated to assume that the cult at Eteonos originated in epic tradition like so many other heroic cults.³¹

Solutions via initiation or via ritual prove to be unsatisfactory: an investigation into the striking combination of parricide and incest may perhaps be more rewarding. We start with a closer look at parricide. Modern Western society has become differentiated to such a degree that few people are dependent on their fathers for their future; neither are fathers very dependent on their children any more for care in their old age. Consequently, parricide does not play a major role in the modern imagination. It is therefore well to remember that in ancient Greece sons were totally dependent on their fathers for their later status, and that parents looked to their children as a kind of pension. The great stress Greeks laid on honouring parents is a clear indication of a situation in which an underlying tension between fathers and sons must always have existed.³² An ever-present possibility, parricide was considered to be one of the most appalling of crimes. One of the signs of the rule of Hate, as envisaged by Empedocles, is the murder of the father, followed by the consumption of his flesh. Imputation of parricide was one of the 'unspeakable things' which could well result in legal action; even the word 'parricide' was only mentioned with reluctance, if at all.³³

Incest was equally appalling, even though the Greeks did not have a specific word to denote the practice; nor did they condemn sexual relationships between relatives to the same degree as has been usual in the modern Western world. Marriages between uncle/aunt and niece/nephew were relatively current in both the archaic and classical period. Marriages of first cousins and those between half-brothers and half-sisters were also not uncommon.³⁴ Those between brothers and sisters seem to have been just beyond the limits of the admissible, although Carians, Egyptians and the Ptolemies permitted them.³⁵ The *Odyssey* can still describe the marriage of Aeolus' children without

comment, even though it is located on an island outside normal civilisation. In Hesiod's *Theogony*, brother/sister marriages among the gods are evidently not considered to be a problem, but such marriages occur in most mythologies of the world without any apparent condemnation. In the classical period, imputation of incest with a sister belongs to the normal vocabulary of legal and political abuse, but these accusations never seem to have led to a formal trial. In the early Hellenistic period, Philetas still mentions a marriage of Aeolus' children without any penalty or punishment. In the same period, Hermesianax relates the story of Leucippus falling in love with his sister. Although his mother condoned the affair, it had terrible consequences. When the sister's fiancé denounced the couple to their father, the old man tried to catch the couple *in flagrante delicto*. In the turmoil that followed the daughter was inadvertently killed by the father, who in turn was killed by the son, also inadvertently. Even in this Greek soap opera, love between brother and sister is condoned by the mother, although the parricide indicates rejection by the poet.³⁶ The same disapproval appears in Euripides who lets Aeolus put his incestuous daughter to death. Ovid even pictures her fate in the cruellest of terms – it was apparently a relationship which only gradually became totally inadmissible.³⁷

Not so sex between parents and children. In Orphic mythology, Zeus' rape of his mother Rhea/Demeter results in the birth of a daughter, Persephone, with two faces, four eyes and horns: the mother is so shocked that she leaves her baby. The same poetry has Zeus mating with Persephone in the shape of a snake. However, the background of these idiosyncratic beliefs is still very much under-researched; it seems therefore too early to draw conclusions from them. The imputation of sex between father and daughter or mother and son was part of normal political and legal abuse. We can hardly be surprised, though, that discussions of real cases are lacking – even today these matters are usually clouded in a veil of secrecy. At the imaginative level, however, various examples of such relationships can be found. Having tasted his own children, Thyestes later inadvertently slept with his daughter and in this way begat Aigisthos, the murderer of Agamemnon. In a probably Hellenistic tale, the chief of the Pelasgians, Piasos raped his daughter Larissa, who in retribution managed to drown her father in a barrel of wine. In another tale, Harpalyke of Argos was raped by her father Klymenos. Subsequently, she killed her youngest brother (or her son) and served him up to her father during a public banquet. The gods changed her into a bird and her father committed suicide.³⁸

In these stories, incest leads to parricide or cannibalism, whereas parricide can lead to incest (Oedipus) or cannibalism (rule of Hate). This cannot be chance. For the Greeks, incest, parricide and cannibalism were the great taboos which marked off the civilised from the rest of the world. Transgressions in these particular areas were the crimes ascribed to the *tyrannos*, the one person who had placed himself outside normal society. These were also the transgressions propagated by the Cynics in their opposition to the ruling

norms of the polis. Cannibalism, incest and killing old people were also the crimes which the Greeks ascribed to surrounding peoples in order to stress the superiority of their own civilisation. They were not unique in this attitude, though.³⁹ Cannibalism and incest were also standard accusations levelled by Europeans against inhabitants of countries discovered in the early modern age; indeed, these imputations seem to occur all over the world.⁴⁰

We can now see that there is a strong moralistic flavour about these stories, since the monstrosity of the transgression is commented upon by letting the protagonist commit a further monstrosity. Whoever commits incest is prone to become a parricide or cannibal as well. Or, whoever commits parricide will become incestuous and consume human flesh. The corollary must be that Oedipus' incest is not a pre-Freudian reflection on his relationship with his mother but a comment on his parricide. The lack of any profound interest in his mother is confirmed by the variety of her names: epic poetry calls her Epikaste, tragedy Jocaste.⁴¹

There are two more aspects to be considered. First, those who break the great taboos sometimes experience an abnormal end, as two further examples may illustrate. A late archaic poet related how Odysseus' son by Circe, Telegonus, unknowingly killed his father. Subsequently he married Penelope, and his brother Telemachos, in a way his double, married Circe. Both sons, then, married the wife of their father who was not their own mother – a 'soft' version, so to speak, of the myths we have been discussing. After the wedding all the protagonists were immediately removed to the Isles of the Blessed. The heroisation shows that people who commit crimes like parricide or incest acquire a status beyond normal humans, although they can also become infra-human. The Hellenistic poet Boios told a story about Aegyptus, a Thessalian boy who inadvertently slept with his mother, Boulis. In this case the 'culprits' were changed into birds. One last example. The death of Oedipus in Kolonos as related by Sophocles is a typical Athenian *Lokallegende* which arose in the fifth century when a number of heroes, such as Admetus, Adrastus and Orestes, were annexed by Athens. However, as the previous examples show, the Athenian heroisation of Oedipus was the actualisation of a possibility inherent in the myth, although the tradition of his tomb and his heroic status could conceivably antedate fifth-century Athenian tradition. The monstrosity of the acts is further illustrated by the fact that poets can hardly imagine that any person would *deliberately* kill his father or sleep with his mother. In most cases, the deeds are committed inadvertently or as the punishment of a god.⁴²

After the incest was discovered, Jocaste hanged herself: permanent incestuous relationships were unthinkable. This way of death was typical for female suicides. Weapons were the realm of men, and women seem to have respected their monopoly. Oedipus remarried, and again the names of his wife vary. It is hard for us to understand that a poet could let Oedipus remarry, but the wedding may well have been a poet's solution to the question 'What happened next?' In a way, the myth was finished after the discovery of the

incest but an audience always wants more. So what can a poet do other than go on with what always happens? The earliest stages of the Indo-European languages did not have a word for 'widower'. This absence undoubtedly reflected a social reality: to be a widower was not a permanent male status. So Oedipus had to remarry. Similarly, Jason gave funeral games after his murder of Pelias, and Orestes provided a funeral banquet after killing the murderer of his father. Although we are told that Oedipus suffered greatly, he remained king, most likely died in battle and received a normal funeral; his blindness is probably mentioned first in the *Oedipodeia*, an epic poem of the seventh (?) century. Does this mean that the Homeric age rated parricide a very serious crime, but still less serious than later centuries? Or are the strife and death of his sons also part of the terrible consequences of Oedipus' parricide? There is something unsatisfactory about his end.⁴³

Having looked at the successive periods of Oedipus' life, we can finally consider the problem of the myth's origin. Where was the myth told first? As Burkert (see n 2) observes, its place of origin is highly uncertain. The family of Oedipus is not well established at Thebes at all, since there are no indissoluble ties with local institutions and cults. The composition of the myth illustrates this lack of dependence on any one specific local ritual. The Oedipus myth is clearly a *bricolage* from various mythical motifs: the exposure, the coming of age of a prince, and the combination of parricide and incest. As we have seen, these motifs can occur separately in a variety of myths, but they have been combined to particularly startling effect in the Oedipus myth which an early poet located in Thebes for reasons unknown to us.

Despite the uncertainty about the myth's origin we would like to close this study with a suggestion regarding its meaning and place of recitation in the early archaic age. In the classical period, Oedipus' life had become part of the tragic chain of events of Labdacus' doomed house, but his life is still considered in its own right in the oldest version of his myth (*Odyssey* 11.271–80). Oedipus' father was the king of Thebes, and Oedipus himself, as the *Odyssey* notes, 'continued to rule' after his mother's suicide – thus sovereignty is singled out as his most important quality. Like many other archaic myths, the myth of Oedipus is concerned with the succession to the throne.⁴⁴

In this case, however, the myth relates the story of a *perverted* succession – the incest being the narrative expression of society's disapproval of parricide: Oedipus is a model of how not to succeed to the throne. In the classical period the aspect of succession no longer appealed to the poets, but in the early archaic age this aspect must have been highly relevant. Considering the importance attached to sovereignty, it is not impossible that at one time the myth was told to princes during their puberty rites. By growing up, princes form a threat to their fathers whose throne they will one day have to occupy. In a way, the Oedipus myth can be read as a warning to the younger generation: 'You have grown up but you must continue to respect your fathers.' There is something Freudian about this myth.

2. A Greek Oedipus Complex?

Freud proposed a different solution. Having observed that neurotic children may be in love with their mother and want to kill their father, he stated that the same feelings, although less clear and less intense, can be found in normal children; the Oedipus myth supported this observation. The thesis has rightly been combated by Vernant who pointed out that his foster mother would have had to be the focus of Oedipus' feelings, not Jocaste.⁴⁵ It is nevertheless striking that we do find a kind of Oedipus complex in classical Greece. In the *Oedipus Rex*, Jocaste says to Oedipus: 'Many mortals have slept with their mother in their dreams.' Plato mentions similar dreams, and in a chapter of his *Dreambook* which reads like a Greek Kinsey report, Artemidorus gives a detailed exposition of them.⁴⁶ Is it purely by chance that we first start to hear about these dreams in the fifth century? Probably not. In the early archaic age upper-class mothers – the only ones about whom we have any information – will have had limited contact with their sons, since at an early age these were removed from home for fosterage or other types of initiatory education. Moreover, women had a relatively varied social life in which up to a certain extent they could freely mix with males. In the course of that age drastic changes took place. Except in certain Dorian communities, the customary rites of initiation gradually disappeared, and husbands started to separate their women from the presence of other men; a not so splendid isolation became the rule.⁴⁷

These changes must have had a considerable impact on the mother-son relationship. We may compare developments in modern Greek villages. Since the tractors have removed working women from the fields, women are leading a much more restricted life at home. The pampering of their sons has now become one of the foci of their life. The same development will have taken place in classical Greece. The women of the upper classes had to stay at home, and they were not even allowed to dine with their husbands when other men were present. Raising the children now became one of their main activities. In Plato's *Laws*, the Athenian stranger mentions that the children are under the care of their nurses and mothers until they come into the hands of teacher and *paidagogoi*. The Obsequious Man of Theophrastus even has to ask his host to let the host's children join them for dinner. The consequent close contact between sisters and brothers enables Electra to say to Orestes: 'nor did the household raise you: I was your nurse'. We do not know exactly how long a boy remained under his mother's wing, but during the events leading up to the liberation of Thebes from the Spartan domination in 379, a Theban brought his fifteen-year old son along to a banquet organised by one of the pro-Spartan collaborators. The boy came from the women's quarters.⁴⁸

It was these changes in women's lives, I suggest, which gave rise to dreams of sleeping with the mother. Similarly, we cannot fail to note that Freud's observations took place after drastic changes in most women's lives, since in

the course of the nineteenth century the social contacts open to women once again became restricted in the upper classes. It seems likely that this development, coupled with the rise of the nuclear family as we know it today, generated the social environment which produced the feelings observed by Freud.⁴⁹ Even the Oedipus complex has a history.⁵⁰

Notes

1. Cf. L. Edmunds, *Oedipus. The Ancient Legend and Its Later Analogues* (Baltimore and London, 1985) 3–6 (with earlier bibliography); add C. Ossola, 'Edipo e ragioni di Stato', *Lett. It.*, 39 (1982) 482–505; H. Schmitz, 'Oedipus bei Dürrenmatt', *Gymnasium*, 92 (1985) 199–208. Edmunds's study is very informative regarding the later analogues but less satisfactory in its treatment of the Greek myth; see my review in *JHS*, 106 (1986).

2. See the balanced appraisal by E. L. de Kock, 'The Sophoklean Oidipus and Its Antecedents', *Acta Class.*, 4 (1961) 7–28 (with earlier bibliography) and *Acta Class.*, 5 (1962) 15–37; see also W. Pötscher, 'Die Oidipus-Gestalt', *Eranos*, 71 (1973) 12–44; T. Stephanopoulos, *Umgestaltung des Mythos durch Euripides* (Athens, 1980) 99ff; W. Burkert, 'Seven against Thebes: an Oral Tradition between Babylonian Magic and Greek Literature', in *I poemi epici rapsodici non omerici e la tradizione orale* (Padua, 1981) 29–48; J. -P. Vernant, 'Oedipe', in Y. Bonnefoy, *Dictionnaire des Mythologies II* (Paris, 1981) 190–2; R. C. T. Parker, *Miasma* (Oxford, 1983) 385f.

3. C. Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology I* (Harmondsworth, 1972) 213–18, 1st edn (1955). *Contra*: E. Leach, *Lévi-Strauss* (London, 1970) 62ff; Detienne, *Dionysos*, 19f.

4. M. Delcourt, *Oedipe ou la légende du conquérant*, 2nd edn (Paris, 1981); V. J. Propp, 'Edip v svete folkloru', *Učenyje zapiski Leningradskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta*, Ser. fil. 72 (1944) fasc. 9, 138–75 = V. J. Propp, *Edipo alla luce del folclore* (Turin, 1975) 85–137 = L. Edmunds and A. Dundes (eds), *Oedipus: A Folklore Casebook* (New York, 1983) 76–121.

5. C. Lévi-Strauss, *Anthropologie structurale II* (Paris, 1973) 175–233.

6. I will only give the older sources. For an exhaustive study, see C. Robert, *Oedipus*, 2 vols (Berlin, 1915) and *Die griechische Heldensage I* (Berlin, 1921) 876–902, and Edmunds, *Oedipus*, 6–17; add the reference to Oedipus' incest in Ibycus (Page, *Suppl. Lyr. Gr.*, 222); P. J. Parsons, *ZPE*, 26 (1977) 7–36 and J. M. Bremer, A. V. Erp Taalman Kip, S. R. Slings, *Some Recently Found Greek Poems* (Leiden, 1987) 128–174, on Stesichorus' version of the Oedipus myth.

7. I follow here C. Sourvinou-Inwood, *Theseus as Son and Stepson* (London, 1979) 65 n 68, who has introduced the notion of the 'original pattern' of the myth, that is to say 'all versions formed while the mentality which operated on the creation of the myth was still alive and operative, so that the myth was understood and reshaped in its own terms'.

8. Cf. J. Fontenrose, *The Delphic Oracle* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1978) 55ff, 96–100.

9. Exposure on Cithaeron: Soph. *OT*; Eur. *Phoen.* 25; Sen. *Phoen.* 31–3; Nic. Dam. *FGrH* 90 F 8; Apollod. 3.5.7; J. Rudhardt, 'Oedipe et les chevaux', *MH*, 40 (1983) 131–9. Shepherds: C. Segal, *Tragedy and Civilisation: An Interpretation of Sophocles* (Cambridge, Mass., 1981) 31; M. C. Amouretti, 'L'Iconographie du berger' in *Iconographie et histoire des mentalités* (Paris, 1979) 155–67. Transhumance: St Georgoudi, *Rev. Et. Gr.*, 87 (1974) 167–9.

10. Washing queen: *Corp. Vas. Ant.* France 23; Louvre 15, pl. 10; *Hyg.fab.* 66. Nausicaa: Hom. *Od.* 6.90–5. Other washing women: *Od.* 15.406; Eur. *Hipp.* 121ff; Nonnus D. 3.90–3.

11. Paris: R. A. Coles, *A New Oxyrhynchus Papyrus: The Hypothesis of Euripides' Alexandros* (London, 1974); P. Oxy. 3650. Perseus' exposure: M. Werre-de Haas, *Aeschylus' Dictyulci* (Diss., Leiden, 1961) 5–10; J. H. Oakley, 'Danae and Perseus on Seriphos', *AJA*, 86 (1982) 111–15. Polluted objects: Parker, *Miasma*, 210; Curse: H. S. Versnel, *Studi Storico-Religiosi*, 1 (1978) 41f.

12. Cf. G. Binder, *Die Aussetzung des Königskindes: Kyros und Romulus* (Meisenheim, 1964); idem, in K. Ranke (ed.), *Enzyklopädie des Märchens I* (Berlin and New York, 1977) 1048–66; B. Lewis, *The Sargon Legend* (Cambridge, Mass., 1980).

13. See especially Delcourt, *Oedipe*, 1–65.

14. On the exposure motif see also J. Bremmer and N. Horsfall, *Myth and Mythography* [London, 1987] 27–30.

15. Multilateral of feet: Soph. *OT* 1026; Eur. *Phoen.* 28–31; Andronikos *FGrH* 324 F 62; Peisandros *FGrH* 16 F 10; Apollod. 3.5.7. Marginal role: P. G. Maxwell-Stuart, *Maia*, 27 (1975) 37–43. Sophocles: O. Taplin, *Entr. Hardt.*, 29 (1982) 155f.
16. Cf. Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology* II; J. -P. Vernant, 'From Oedipus to Periander', *Arethusa*, 15 (1982) 19–38; D. Anzieu *et al.*, *Psychanalyse et culture grecque* (Paris, 1980) 9–52; note also the critique of Lévi-Strauss and Vernant by H. Lloyd-Jones, 'Psychoanalysis and the Study of the Ancient World', in P. Horden (ed.), *Freud and the Humanities* (London, 1985) 152–80, esp. 166–71.
17. Cf. E. Risch, *Kleine Schriften* (Berlin and New York, 1981) 294–313; C. Calame, 'Le nom d'Oedipe', in *Edipo. Il teatro Greco e la cultura europea* (Rome, 1986) 395–407; idem, *Le récit en Grèce ancienne* (Paris, 1986) 153–61, 215–17.
18. There are many examples of changing names of females in Pherecydes *FGrH* 3; note also the various names of Orpheus' wife (Graf, this volume, [Ch. 5, section 1](#)), and of Oedipus' mother and his second wife (below); see also Henrichs, this volume, [Ch. 11, section 2](#), on names in myth.
19. Fosterage: Bremmer and Horsfall, *Roman Myth*, 53–6. Public school: N. Orme, *From Childhood to Chivalry: the Education of the English Kings and Aristocracy 1066–1530* (London, 1984) 44–80.
20. Cyrus: G. Widengren, *Der Feudalismus im alten Iran* (Cologne, 1969) 64–95. Romulus and Remus: Bremmer (above, note 14). Return home: Schol. *Od.* 11.271.
21. Killing: Soph. *OT* 806–7, 810–13; Eur. *Phoen.* 44; Nic. Dam. *FGrH* 90 F 8; Apollod. 3.5.7; cf. Robert, *Oedipus* I, 86f.
22. Hecate: Sophocles *F* 535.4 Radt; Ar. *Plut.* 594–7; Apollod. *FGrH* 244 F 110a; Chariclideis *PCG* IV F 1 with Kassel and Austin ad loc.; Parker, *Miasma*, 30. Plato: *Leg.* 873c. Nonnus: *D* 9.40, 47.484.
23. Text of riddle: Asclepiades *FGrH* 12 F 7a (tr. L. Edmunds); cf. A. Lesky, *Gesammelte Schriften* (Munich, 1966) 318–26; H. Lloyd-Jones, in R. Dawe *et al.* (eds), *Dionysiaca* (Cambridge, 1978) 60f. Other versions: Frazer on Apollod. 3.5.8.
24. Sphinx: A. Lesky, *RE* II 3 (1929) 1703–25; J.-P. Moret, *Oedipe, la Sphinx et les Thébains*, 2 vols (Rome, 1984). Location Sphinx: Moret, *Oedipe* I, 69–75. Ecclesia: Asclepiades *FGrH* 12 F 7b. Acropolis: Apollod. 3.5.8.
25. Sphinx a girl: Pindar fr. 177d; Soph. *OT* 1199; Eur. *Phoen.* 48, 806, 1042; Moret, *Oedipe* I, 51f (who stresses the Sphinx's resemblance to the Pythia). Onanising Spinx: Moret, *Oedipe* I, 144–6. Monsters female: J. Gould, *JHS*, 100 (1980) 55f; J. Bremmer, 'The Old Women of Ancient Greece', in J. Blok and P. Mason (eds), *Sexual Asymmetry* (Amsterdam, 1987) 191–215, esp. 203.
26. *Contra*: L. Edmunds, *The Sphinx in the Oedipus Legend* (Königstein, 1981); note also the critique by C. Callanan, *Fabula*, 23 (1982) 316–18; R. Parker, *CR*, 34 (1984) 336. Vase: Moret, *Oedipe* I, 39f. Allusions: West on Hes. *Op.* 533.
27. Lydia: Hdt. 1.713; Nic. Dam. *FGrH* 90 F 44. Atossa: Hdt. 3.68, 88. Knut: D. Whitelock *et al.* (eds), *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 2nd edn (London, 1965) C 1017.
28. L. Gernet and A. Boulanger, *Le Génie grec dans la religion*, 2nd edn (Paris, 1970) 77f; H. Jeanmaire, *Rev. Phil.*, 21 (1947) 167; Delcourt, *Oedipe*, and Propp 'Edip', also suggested a connection with initiation.
29. Theseus and initiation: H. Jeanmaire, *Couroi et courètes* (Lille, 1939) 243–5, 338–63; F. Graf, *MH*, 36 (1979) 13–19. Interpretation of parricide: Sourvinou-Inwood, *Theseus*, 15, quoting Leach, *Lévi-Strauss*, 80. Bororo myth: Burkert, *S&H*, 14; C. Lévi-Strauss, *The Raw and the Cooked* (London, 1970) 35–48.
30. For a critique of Propp, 'Edip', see A. Taylor, 'The Biographical Pattern in Traditional Narrative', *J. Folk. Inst.*, 1 (1964) 114–29.
31. Eteonos: Lysimachos *FGrH* 382 F 2, cf. Robert, *Oedipus* I, 44; Burkert, 'Mythos und Mythologie', in *Propyläen Geschichte der Literatur* I (Berlin, 1981) 11–35, esp. 19. L. Farnell, *Greek Hero Cults and Ideas of Immortality* (Oxford, 1921) 334 had already noted: 'His [Oedipus'] cult is extraneous and cannot be dated to a very early period.' L. Edmunds, 'The Cults and the Legend of Oedipus', *HSCP*, 85 (1981) 221–38, is not convincing.
32. Honouring parents: K. J. Dover, *Greek Popular Morality in the Time of Plato and Aristotle* (Oxford, 1974) 273–5. Father/son relationship: S. Bertman (ed.), *The Conflict of Generations in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Amsterdam, 1976); A. Maffi, 'Padri e figli fra diritto positivo e diritto immaginario nella Grecia classica', in E. Pellizer and N. Zorzetti (eds), *La paura dei padri nella società antica e medievale* (Rome and Bari, 1983) 3–27.
33. Parricide: Parker, *Miasma*, 124. Hate: Empedokles B 137 Diels/Kranz. Unspeakable: D. Clay, 'Unspeakable Words in Greek Tragedy', *Am. J. Phil.*, 103 (1982) 277–98.
34. Uncle/aunt and niece/nephew: Bremmer, *ZPE*, 50 (1983) 175 n 13, 181 n 43. First cousins: W. Thompson, 'The Marriage of First Cousins in Athenian Society', *Phoenix*, 21 (1967) 273–82. Half-brothers/sisters: W. Lacey, *The Family in Classical Greece* (London, 1968) 106; A. R. W. Harrison, *The Law of Athens* I (Oxford, 1968) 22f.

35. Carians: S. Hornblower, *Mausolus* (Oxford, 1982) 358–63. Ptolemies and Egyptians: K. Hopkins, 'Brother-Sister Marriage in Roman Egypt', *Comp. Stud. in Soc. and Hist.*, 22 (1980) 303–54. It is noteworthy that incest between brothers and sisters is not mentioned in the Egyptian, late Hellenistic (cf. L. Koenen, *ZPE*, 54 (1984) 9–13 and in *Studio Hellenistica*, 27 (Leuven, 1983) 174–89) *Potter's Oracle*, although in later apocalyptic literature sex between siblings frequently is a sign of the end of the world; cf. K. Berger, *Die griechische Daniel-Diege* (Leiden, 1976) 89f.

36. Aeolus: *Od.* 10.5–12; cf. P. Vidal-Naquet, *Le Chasseur noir*, 2nd edn (Paris, 1983) 53. Imputations: H. Mattingly, *The University of Leeds Review*, 14 (1971) 284 (Ostrakon mentioning Cimon), cf. Parker, *Miasma*, 98; Lys. 14.28 (Alcibiades). Philetas: Parthen. 2. Leucippus: Parth. 5; cf. E. Pellizer, *Favole d'identità – favole di paura* (Rome, 1982) 66–9. For all the mythological stories, see J. Rudhardt, 'De l'inceste dans la mythologie grecque'. *Revue franç. de psychanal.*, 46(1982) 731–63, esp. 733–9, to whom I am deeply indebted; add E. Rohde, *Der griechische Roman und seine Vorläufer*, 3rd edn (Leipzig, 1914) 448.

37. Aeolus: Euripides *Aeolus* (Nauck, *Tr. Graec. Fragm.*, p. 365f); cf. Arist. *Nub.* 1371f, *Ran.* 1081; Plato *Leg.* 838c; *Ov. Her.* 11.3–130.

38. Orphic mythology: M. L. West, *The Orphic Poems* (Oxford, 1983) 93ff. Abuse: Hipponax fr. 20 Degani (= 12 West); Lysias fr. 30; Isaeus 5.39. Pelopeia: Radt on Sophocles *Thyestes* (p. 239f). Larissa: Parthen. 28; Nic. *Damasc. FGrH* 90 F 19; Strabo 13.621c; Schol. Ap. Rhod. 1.1063; Eustath. 357.43f. Harpalyke: Euphorion fr. 26; Parthen. 13; Hyg. *Fab.* 206, 242, 246, 253; Nonnos *D* 12.70–5; Schol. 11. 14.291; Rohde, *Der griechische Roman*, loc. cit.

39. Cannibalism, incest and parricide as the great crimes: Detienne, *Dionysos*, 154; A. Moreau, 'A propos d'Oedipe: la liaison entre trois crimes – parricide, inceste et cannibalisme', in S. Saïd et al, *Etudes de littérature ancienne* (Paris, 1979) 97–127; Parker, *Miasma*, 326. *Tyrannos*: Detienne, *Dionysos*, 144; Vernant (above), n 16), 33f. Cynics: Vidal-Naquet, *Chasseur*, 368; Parker, loc. cit. Stock accusations: A. Henrichs, *Entr. Hardt.*, 27 (1981) 233f (cannibalism); J. Bremmer, *The Early Greek Concept of the Soul* (Princeton, 1983) 103f (killing old people); B. H. Stricker, 'Camephís', *Med. Nederl. Ak. Wet., Afd. Letterk.*, N.R. 38, 3 (1975) with an exhaustive, if uncritical, collection of references to incest in the ancient world (I owe this reference to Theo Korteweg).

40. Cf. W. Arens, *The Man-Eating Myth* (New York, 1979) who wrongly denies the existence of cannibalism altogether, cf. P. Vidal-Naquet, *Les juifs, la mémoire et le présent* (Paris, 1981) 197f; A. Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man* (Cambridge, 1982) 80–90.

41. Epikaste: Hom. *Od.* 11.271; Apollod. 3.5.7. Jocaste: Soph. *OT* 632, 950; Eur. *Phoen.* 12, 289, etc.

42. Telegonus: Proclus apud Kinkel, *Ep. Gr. Fr.* 57f; Apollod. *Epit.* 7.36 with Frazer ad loc. Boios: Anton. Lib. 5. Athens: A. Brelich, *Gli eroi greci* (Rome, 1958) 40. Athenian cult of Oedipus: A. Henrichs, 'The "Sobriety" of Oedipus: Sophocles OC 100 misunderstood', *HSCP*, 87 (1983) 87–100; Vidal-Naquet in J.-P. Vernant and P. Vidal-Naquet, *Mythe et tragédie en Grèce ancienne*, II (Paris, 1986) 199f.

43. Hanging Jocaste: *Od.* 11.277f; Soph. *OT* 1263f, *Ant.* 53f, cf. N. Loraux, 'Le corps étranglé', in Y. Thomas (ed.), *Du châtement dans la cité* (Rome, 1984) 195–218 and *Façons tragiques de tuer une femme* (Paris, 1985). Names of wives: *Oidipodeia* apud Paus. 9.5.11; Pherecydes *FGrH* 3 F 95; Peisandros *FGrH* 16 F 10; Onasias apud Paus. 9.5.11; Schol. *Il.* 4.376. On the problem of Oedipus' wives and children see also the forthcoming commentary on his new edition of the epic fragments which Dr Malcolm Davies kindly let me read. I regret that I was only able to read his illuminating commentary at too late a stage in the preparation of this chapter. Widower: P. Koschaker, *Zs. f. aush. u. intern. Privatrecht*, Sonderheft zu Bd. 11 (1937) 118. Death and funeral: *Il.* 23.679; Hes. fr. 192; Soph. *Ant.* 53f. Blindness: Burkert, 'Seven against Thebes', 30 (Oedipus' blindness in the *Oedipodeia*): R. G. A. Buxton, 'Blindness and Limits: Sophokles and the Logic of Myth', *JHS*, 100 (1980) 22–37; D. Bouvier and P. Moreau, 'Phinée ou le père aveugle et la marâtre aveuglante', *Rev. Belge Phil. Hist.*, 61 (1983) 5–19.

44. Cf. Gernet and Boulanger, *Le Génie grec*, 76f on the archaic myths concerning the succession to the throne.

45. S. Freud, *Die Traumdeutung* (Vienna, 1900) 180ff (= *Standard Edn* IV, 258, 261–4). *Contra*: Vernant, 'Oedipe sans complexe', in J.-P. Vernant and P. Vidal-Naquet, *Mythe et tragedie en Grèce ancienne* (Paris, 1972) 75–98. It seems, though, that Vernant does not always do Freud full justice, cf. F. Schuh, *Hephaistos*. 576 (1983/4) 265–7; Lloyd-Jones, 'Psychoanalysis', 164f.

46. Soph. *OT* 981f; Plato *Rep.* 571c; Ártemidorus 1.79: cf. Pack (Teubner edition) ad loc. and S. Price, 'The future of dreams: from Freud to Artemidorus', *Past & Present* (1986); E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1951) 47, 61f.

47. Women: G. Wickert-Micknatt, *Die Frau* = *Archaeologia Homerica* III R (Göttingen, 1982). Fosterage: see note 19. Initiation: Brelich, *Gli eroi greci*, 124–8.

48. Modern Greece: M.-E. Handman, *La Violence et la ruse. Hommes et femmes dans un village grec*

(Aix-en-Provence, 1983) 121f, 141–4. Raising children: Plato *Leg.* 7.808e; Theophr. *Char.* 5.5; Soph. *El.* 1143–8; Plut. *Pel.* 9.5, *Mor.* 595b. For this part of my argument I am totally indebted to M. Golden, *Aspects of Childhood in Classical Athens* (Diss., Toronto, 1981) 268–71, to whom the reader is referred for a more detailed discussion of these passages.

49. L. Stone, *The Past and Present Revisited* (London, New York, 1987), p. 353f: ‘Clinical Freudianism, with its stress on penis envy, early incestuous experiences (real or imagined), and the Oedipus complex, looks increasingly like the product of a Victorian, central European, middle-class, male chauvinist society. Some of its major hypotheses may well not apply to other times and other places.’

50. For information, comments and correction of the English I would like to thank Richard Buxton, Claude Calame, Albert Henrichs, André Lardinois, Alasdair MacDonald and Robert Parker. I owe a special debt to J.-M. Moret for the generous and timely gift of his splendid *Oedipe*.

Wolves and Werewolves in Greek Thought

Richard Buxton

One of the most promising developments in the recent study of myth has been the emphasis placed on the logic of the concrete'. This phrase, borrowed from Lévi-Strauss's investigation of *la pensée sauvage*,¹ refers to the tendency of 'primitive' forms of classification – as deployed, for instance, in myths and rituals – to be articulated in terms of empirical categories (raw/cooked, wild/tame, in the bush/in the village, etc.) and tangible things in the real world (honey, oak-trees, gold, etc.). In the present paper I take the example of one thing in the world – the wolf – to show how this sort of thinking operated in ancient Greece. In [section 1](#). I examine a variety of contexts in which wolves appear. My aim is to demonstrate how the complex reality of the wolf tended to be pared down in the tradition to a small number of characteristics which were 'good to think with',² and how even writers of a 'scientific' type were influenced by features of the wolf as depicted in myth. In section 2. I use the specific example of the werewolf to indicate how Greek wolves were 'good to think with' in one particular myth-and-ritual complex; and I make some more general points about ways in which myth and ritual can be seen to complement and yet to contrast with each other.

1. Greek Wolves, Real and Imagined

Before mankind's systematic attempts to exterminate it, the grey wolf (*canis lupus*) was a tremendously widespread predator.³ In North America it was found coast to coast; in the Old World it extended from Britain south to Spain and Portugal, east across Europe to Russia, China and Japan. In the New World grey wolves are now virtually extinct except in Alaska: extensive use of strychnine in the nineteenth century, and a decline in the population of the wolves prey (especially caribou), have contributed towards the decline. A comparable though less drastic sequence of events has occurred in Europe. By

1800 wolves were extinct in the British Isles.⁴ According to a major investigation published in 1975 by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources,⁵ wolves are now extinct in France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, East and West Germany, Switzerland, Austria and Hungary; virtually extinct in Finland, Norway and Sweden; and endangered in Portugal, Spain, Italy, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland and the USSR. To judge by figures for wolf kills, the population of wolves in Greece is fairly stable. Kills stand at about 600–700 per year, the bulk of them being in Macedonia, but some also in Epirus, Thessaly and Thrace. Unfortunately no reliable inference can be made about the size of the whole wolf population of Greece on the basis of figures for kills.

The animal responsible for the decline of the wolf is man. Why this human hostility to the wolf? Normally wolves prey on large, hoofed beasts – the ungulates: caribou, bison, antelope, deer, moose, elk. When these are scarce the wolf turns to smaller mammals such as mice and rabbits, or to man's domesticated herds. It is the fact that since the Neolithic period man has raised stock which has brought him into conflict with the wolf.

It is no surprise, then, that in classical antiquity we find numerous references to the wolf as a cruel, predatory enemy. Plutarch (*Sol.* 23.3) reports that 'the Athenians were from of old great enemies of wolves, since their country was better for pasturage than for growing crops'. So Solon introduced a law that 'the man who brings in a wolf is paid five drachmas; for a wolf-cub, one drachma'.⁶ (According to Demetrios of Phaleron, five drachmas was the price of an ox, one drachma that of a sheep.) Wolves were proverbial for cruelty; hence Orestes' words about his own and his sister's implacability: 'like a raw-minded wolf, our disposition, which we get from our mother, cannot be appeased' (Aesch. *Cho.* 421–2). Already in Homer the wolf is seen as deadly and bloodthirsty, as in the famous simile about the Myrmidons (*Il.* 16.156ff).

In representing wolves as cruel adversaries of man Greek thought was simply reflecting the stark fact of the competition between the two species. But other qualities ascribed by Greek tradition to wolves begin to take us away from a direct transcription of 'reality'. It will be convenient to concentrate on the two most prominent qualities: wolves co-operate; and they belong outside.

The perception of wolves as co-operative does far more than simply reflect the existence of wolf-packs. In a range of historical periods and in many different types of source, from the technical to the poetical to the anecdotal, the point is developed and elaborated. Xenophon (*Hipparch.* 4.19–20) describes how, in attacking a convoy, some drive off the guard while others seize the plunder. An epigram in the Palatine Anthology tells of a traveller who jumped into the Nile to escape wolves: 'but they continued the chase through the water, each holding on by its teeth to another's tail. A long bridge of wolves was formed over the stream, and the self-taught stratagem of the swimming beasts caught the man' (9.252).⁷ Aelian too describes how wolves co-operate at a kill (NA 8.14), and he also has the tail story: when wolves cross a river 'they

fasten their teeth in one another's tails ... and swim across without harm or danger' (NA 3.6). There is alas no reliably recorded evidence of wolf behaviour of this kind – the wolf is in its own right a particularly powerful swimmer.⁸ The important thing is that wolves were *perceived* as acting co-operatively.

The tradition of lupine co-operation is a long one. The grammarian Timotheos of Gaza (5/6th century AD) observes in his *On Animals*⁹ that, when two wolves coincide at a kill, 'the shares are equal'.¹⁰ Once more it is instructive to consider the situation at an actual kill. In Greece today – and it is unlikely that things were very different in antiquity – large kills are rare, so the issue of sharing does not arise. (You don't share a mouse.) When a large kill is made, the cubs will usually be allowed in first, and thereafter there is a definite *non*-equality: dominant animals (i.e. those highest in the 'pecking' order) get first go, and so on down the line. But what is true is that there is a structured aspect to a kill, so that the notion of co-operation has a basis in actual behaviour. Myth 'clarifies' an asymmetrical order into equality.

It is a small step from the idea that wolves treat each other as equals to the idea that wolves are all alike; and this step was also taken in Greek belief. Thus we find in Aesop (343 Perry) a story about a battle between the dogs and the wolves. The dog general was unwilling to engage the enemy because they (the wolves) were all alike, while the dogs – some being Cretan, some Molossian, some Thracian, not to mention the variations in colour – were all different. Once more the underlying notion is that the wolves will prove successful by virtue of being able to co-operate more closely than their adversaries.

Like the co-operative wolf, the wolf as outsider has a grounding in observable reality. Not only do wolves in general roam in areas which seem to humans to be outside the confines of human territory, but the *lone* wolf – having dropped out of or been expelled from a pack as a result of wounding in a fight or infirmity, and thus being a kind of outsider even amongst a community of outsiders – is a recognised part of wolf ecology, known to antiquity as to us (e.g. Aristot. *HA* 594a30). However, as with co-operation, the point is developed so that the wolf becomes a powerful image for the man apart from other men. In his poem about a person in exile Alkaios writes as follows: 'I live a life in the wilds, longing to hear the agora ... I am in exile, living on the boundary ... here I settled alone as a *lykaimiais*' (Lobel/Page 130. 16–25). The last word is a puzzle, and the interpretation 'a wolf-thicket man' is far from certain.¹¹ But for an association with exile, wildness and solitariness a compound of *lykos*, 'wolf', is highly appropriate.¹² There is a similar logic in Pausanias' aetiology for the shrine of Apollo Lykios at Argos, according to which, when Danaos arrived as an outsider in Argos, he found a wolf killing the leader of a herd of cattle. 'It occurred to the Argives that Gelanor' – Danaos' rival for the throne – 'was like the bull, and Danaos like the wolf; for as the wolf will not live with men, so Danaos up to that time had not lived with them [i.e. the Argives]' – because he had come from Egypt (2.19.3–4).¹³ Another mythical exile who had to do with wolves was Athamas (Apollod.

1.9.2). Having killed his son through Hera's madness and been banished from Boeotia, he was told by an oracle to dwell where he should be entertained by wild beasts. This he duly did when he found wolves 'distributing amongst themselves portions of sheep'. Here a human settlement replaces sharing-between-wolves. Thus on the one hand wolves prefigure human society: to share is to be part of a community. On the other hand they contrast with it as barbarity contrasts with civilisation: what they are sharing, after all, is raw meat. The Athamas story neatly embraces both the principal features of the mythical wolf in Greece: as co-operator, it illuminates the human condition by similarity; as outsider, it illuminates it by contrast.¹⁴

So far my account has been synchronic, and has drawn together material from a variety of sources without differentiation on grounds of date or context. To what extent do we need to modify that approach in view of the evidence?

We may start with the matter of historical development. The most recent scholarly treatment of the wolf in ancient Greece, that by C. Mainoldi, puts forward the argument that Greek perception of the wolf underwent one major change over time: from being 'le modèle de l'animal fort' in the Homeric poems, the wolf subsequently became marginalised as an emblem of savagery and, above all, of *dolos*, trickery.¹⁵ The post-Homeric association between the wolf and *dolos* is indeed certain: in *Pythian* 2 Pindar expresses the wish: 'May I love my friend; but against my enemy I shall make a secret attack, like a wolf, treading now here now there on my crooked paths' (83–5); a Platonic letter describes a false or tricky friendship as *lykophilia* (318e); Aelian knows how wolves can make up for a lack of strength by feigning a frontal attack, darting aside and leaping on the back of the victim (*NA* 5.19); and perhaps the wolf's best *dolos* is his similarity to a dog, as stated in Plato's *Sophist* (231a).¹⁶ However, not only in the Euripidean *Rhesus* but also in the *Iliad* does the spy Dolon wear a wolfskin during his cunning night exploit (*Il.* 10.334; Eur. *Rhes.* 204ff);¹⁷ and it is hardly coincidence that Odysseus' grandfather, who had been given by Hermes outstanding skill 'in theft and in oath' – the latter on the principle that whoever has power over bonds has power also to break them – is in the *Odyssey* named as *Autolykos* (19.394ff). In short, the idea that trickery is a later development in the Greek image of the wolf seems to me unjustified. Not only that: in my view *no* development in that image can be isolated and located chronologically until we reach the zoological studies of Aristotle.

Differentiation by context, on the other hand, is possible and revealing. In Homeric epic the emphasis (with the exception of the Dolon episode) is on wolves as a collectivity, fierce in the fight and so suitable for comparison to warriors. In the field of political philosophy Plato characteristically uses the violent aspect of the wolf to think about tyranny.¹⁸ In fable the wolf appears frequently, often with emphasis on its cunning, and often too being presented in contrast with the dog.¹⁹ In such contexts, and in others – for instance the passages from *Choephoroi* and *Pythian* 2 cited earlier – the wolf is used as a

means for expressing something about human behaviour. But there is another sort of context which illustrates even more strikingly just how pervasive were the patterns of thought embedded in myth. I refer to works which were explicitly about animals, and which we might variously ascribe to the categories 'folklore' and 'zoology'. As we shall see, the distinction is not unproblematic.

We may begin with a report by Plutarch:

Antipater in his book *On Animals* asserts that wolves give birth at the time when trees that bear nuts or acorns shed their flowers: when they eat these, their wombs are opened. But if there is no supply of these flowers, their offspring die within them and cannot see the light. Moreover those parts of the world that are not fertile in nut-trees or oak-trees are not troubled by wolves. (*Qu. Nat.* 38)

This is a fine example of how Greek thought could combine a traditional pattern of ideas with shrewd empirical observation. Our first reaction is perhaps to find a 'logic of myth' behind Antipater's account, since there was in at least one region an acknowledged religious link between acorns and wolves: Arcadia. Arcadians are perceived as acorn-eaters, hence as pre-civilised;²⁰ Arcadians are also worshippers of Zeus Lykaïos, in whose cult both wolves and oak-trees figure (see below); wolves are outside civilisation, and so are associated with acorn-eaters, who are before it. But there is sound zoology here too. Wolves do indeed share a habitat with nut- and oak-trees. Good years for nuts and acorns mean plentiful supplies of the small animals eaten by wolves, and this plenty means in turn that wolves produce large litters. But when food is scarce, there is in foxes and rabbits a higher proportion of aborted fetuses than in times of plenty, and it is likely that the same is true for wolves. Antipater's assertion thus provides evidence for a remarkable coincidence between traditional and empirical modes of thought.

We might expect *a priori* that if any ancient authority is going to privilege the empirical against the traditional, it will be Aristotle. And in some cases we do indeed find him carefully recording data which subsequent zoological research has corroborated: 'polydactylous quadrupeds (such as the dog, lion, wolf, fox and jackal) all bring forth their young blind, and the eyelid does not separate until some time after birth'; 'the penis is bony in the fox, wolf, marten and weasel'. More rarely, statements of a straightforwardly zoological kind are simply wrong, e.g. 'the neck is flexible and has a number of vertebrae in all animals except the wolf and the lion, in which the neck consists of one bone only'.²¹ In fact all mammals have seven bones in the neck; but, interestingly, some wolves suffer from severe arthritis of the spine, and it is possible that Aristotle's information resulted from observation of an animal so afflicted – it is on general grounds not improbable that infirm wolves offered greater opportunity for close scrutiny than healthy ones.

In addition to findings of the sort just mentioned, though, Aristotle has

other things to say about the wolf; and here the mythical representation of the animal becomes visible once more. At one point he describes it as *gennaios* (thorough-bred), *agrios* (wild) and *epiboulos* (scheming) (*Hist. An.* 488b17). At another the direction of the enquiry seems to be affected by the threatening and predatory figure cut by the wolf in popular belief, when he tackles the matter of wolves eating people. But the specific contribution made by Aristotle to this (apparently) endlessly intriguing issue – he asserts that only *lone* wolves eat men, not wolves in packs (*Hist. An.* 594a30) – is zoologically plausible: the lone wolf, which by definition lacks the support of the pack, is likely to have restricted access to prey, and so might in extremity have to resort to human meat.²² In fact, even where Aristotle's zoological researches are explicitly influenced by the mythical tradition, what is remarkable is the coolness of his judgement:

An account is given of the she-wolf's parturition which comes very near the fabulous [*pros muthon*], viz. that there are just twelve days in the year during which all wolves bring forth their young. The reason for this, they say, is found in a fable, which alleges that it took twelve days to bring Leto from the land of the Hyperboreans to Delos, during which time she had the appearance of a she-wolf because she was afraid of Hera. Whether twelve days really was the time or not has not yet been definitely established by observation; that is merely what is asserted. (*Hist. An.* 580a14)

It may be added that the situation is identical today: we know nothing about the exact birth-periods of European wolves; but it is zoologically certain that there will be a restricted period for birth, and *it is unlikely that this will be more than 2–3 weeks*. As with Antipater's assertion mentioned above, the coincidence between myth and empirical observation is notable; and so too is the ability of Aristotle to set himself apart from the tradition and to reflect critically upon it.

A few conclusions may be drawn from the material presented in this section. (1) Sometimes Greek perception of the wolf directly reflects the facts of human and lupine existence: humans compete with wolves for food, so wolves appear in myth as cruel foes. (2) In other respects traditional thought works on reality by selective emphasis and 'clarification': wolves share a kill *equally*; they are *all alike*. (3) The tradition is not uniform: in different contexts different aspects of the wolf are stressed, though within the broadly similar image shared by all. (4) Aristotelian zoology represents a marked contrast to the mythical tradition. But the distinction between folklore and zoology is not rigid: we find excellent zoology in anecdote, and mythological patterns and concerns in zoology.

2. The Werewolf of Arcadia

Having tried to give a general overview of the place of the wolf in Greek thought, I turn now to one particular aspect of the subject: the cult and myth of the Arcadian werewolf. This complex of religious practice and belief constitutes the single most striking instance of the wolf as ‘good to think with’ surviving from ancient Greece.

We begin with a point of terminology. It seems sensible to distinguish between werewolfism and lycanthropy. The former may be defined as the belief that people are able to turn into wolves; the latter denotes a psychotic disorder according to which one believes that one has oneself turned into a wolf.²³ Compared with the enormous number of werewolf and lycanthropy cases recorded for medieval Europe,²⁴ evidence for such phenomena in antiquity is rare. (We are of course at liberty to wonder how representative our sample is, but all we can do is to operate with what information we have.) Instances of lycanthropy are few and late, but Markellos of Side significantly reports that sufferers experienced their symptoms at night (in February) and in cemeteries, i.e. in a context removed both temporally and spatially from that of normal life – we recall that the Petronian werewolf metamorphosed by moonlight and on a road beside some grave-markers.²⁵ Stories of ancient werewolf belief are again scarce, although there is this time a certain amount of material from Greece. Once more we should note the typical geographical remoteness, as with the Neuri, adjacent to the Scythians in Herodotos’ narrative: ‘The Scythians, and the Greeks settled in Scythia, say that once a year every one of the Neuri is turned into a wolf, and after remaining so for a few days returns again to his former shape’ (Hdt. 4.105). That the Neuri are located by Herodotos next to the Androphagi is wholly logical: in accordance with a pattern of thought common in Greece and in a vast number of other cultures, marginal peoples are perceived as behaving in ways inverse to those favoured by the ‘central’ people.²⁶ Whether the story about the Neuri is entirely a product of this sort of inverse projection, or whether an actual ritual lies behind it, is impossible to decide; but the existence of an initiatory *rite de passage* is perfectly plausible, either on the assumption that the participants literally adopted wolf-disguise,²⁷ or on the view that one who temporarily withdraws ‘outside’ is metaphorically wolfish.

The Neuri were outside, but the Arcadians were before – in fact, before the moon, *proselenoi*,²⁸ and Arcadia was the location of the werewolf cult best known to us from the Greek world. Even today Mount Lykaion has a remote and slightly eerie beauty; how much more eerie in antiquity since, so it was said, a rite of cannibalism was practised there. Pausanias refuses to discuss it (8.38.7); but Plato speaks of a rite in which human innards are mixed with parts of other animals, and the person who tastes the human must turn into a wolf (*Rep.* 565d). One does not need to go all the way with Arens’ ultra-sceptical approach to anthropophagy²⁹ to be doubtful about at least *some* reports of institutionalised cannibalism: as Servius puts it, ‘in sacred rites that which is simulated is accepted as reality’ (on *Aen.* 2.116). When Kourouniotis

dig the site at the beginning of this century he found no human bones,³⁰ and, as Walter Burkert has pointed out, only a very few people are going to know exactly what is in the casserole – the rest is suggestion.³¹ But more profitable than speculation about the precise contents of the cauldron is some consideration of the symbolism and social context of the ritual. And here we do get a clue from Pausanias, who reports:

They say that ever since the time of Lykaon a man was always turned into a wolf at the sacrifice to Lykaian Zeus – but not for his whole life; because if he kept off human flesh when he was a wolf, he turned back into a man after nine years; if he tasted human flesh, he stayed a wild beast for ever. (8.2.6)

The wolf stands for one who by his behaviour has set himself beyond humanity: so much is clear. But why did the Greeks enact this ceremony of ritual exclusion? Before we can attempt an answer we must consider a ritual which sounds remarkably similar to the Lykaion ceremony. Pliny the Elder reports that, according to the Arcadians, a member of the family of Anthos was chosen by lot, left all his clothes on an oak-tree, swam across a pool, went away ‘into a deserted area’, and turned into a wolf. After nine years, provided he had eaten no human meat, he swam back across the pool, took up his clothes, and resumed human shape (NH 8.81). A similar version is given by Augustine (citing Varro), though he refers more vaguely to ‘the Arcadians’ instead of to a specific family (*Civ. Dei* 18.17). Two questions present themselves: (1) How do we interpret the ritual described by Pliny? (2) How does it relate to the ceremony mentioned by Pausanias and Plato?

(1) Pliny’s ritual centres on two symbolic gestures: stripping, and crossing water. Both mark the transition from inside to outside, human to animal. Stripping is associated with animal metamorphosis both in antiquity and later. Pamphile and Lucius in *The Golden Ass* strip before their metamorphoses take place (3.21,24). The werewolf in Petronius removes his clothes before changing shape; and the crucial importance of the clothes for the transition is indicated by the fact that the werewolf ‘fixes’ them by urinating around them, after which they turn to stone (62). Numerous medieval werewolf legends confirm the role of clothes as boundary-marker, as in Marie de France’s lay *Bisclavret*. A Breton lord changes into a wolf three days a week; before doing so he removes his clothes, without which he is deprived of the means of transition back to humanity. His wife and her lover steal his clothes, but eventually the lord is able to recover them, and with them his human form.³²

Water is another boundary between the human and wolfish states. Once more there are medieval parallels: in 1580 Jean Bodin recorded a story, set in Livonia, in which crossing water is a prelude to metamorphosis (of twelve days’ duration) into wolfish form.³³ One all-too-common reductionist tactic is to link such phenomena to the fact that rabies – a supposed ‘origin’ of

werewolf belief – is characterised by hydrophobia: water thus quite literally marks a barrier between man and werewolf (= rabies victim).³⁴ But such a realist approach gets us nowhere in our attempt to understand the symbolic role of the supposed ‘symptom’ in its ritual context.³⁵ More plausibly one might regard the Arcadian pool in a wholly content-free way as simply a boundary between inside and outside; but that would be to ignore the place of water in general, and bathing in particular, in Greek cult.³⁶ Washing or bathing in water from a spring is an element in several important Greek *rites de passage*. After death the corpse was stripped, washed and dressed in new robes as a prelude to being ‘carried out’; before making the transition back to normal life the mourners would themselves bathe. After a birth, mother and child would bathe as a part of the return to normality. Bride and groom bathed before the marriage ceremony. Washing, and sometimes bathing and changing of clothes, was required before the performance of prayer or sacrifice, and preceded other forms of access to the sacred such as prophecy, incubation, and initiation into the mysteries.³⁷ Thus crossing the boundary between sacred and non-sacred space, and between sacred and non-sacred periods of time, is regularly accompanied by bathing. In one way the relevance of this to Pliny’s Arcadian ritual is clear enough, since entering and leaving a sacred space is clearly part of the symbolic drama. But if the ritual as a whole is a *rite de passage*, then bathing becomes that much more appropriate.³⁸

In recent years a good deal of attention has been directed towards rituals of transition in ancient Greece. In particular there have been investigations into the presence of initiation rituals – or survivals of them – in archaic and later Greek culture.³⁹ Fruitful though much of this work has proved, there has been an occasional tendency to exaggerate the explanatory value of initiation. It may therefore be worth spelling out that some rituals – consulting an oracle, for instance – were self-evidently not initiatory, while others – such as the ceremonies surrounding birth, marriage and death – certainly shared with initiation rituals the pattern of separation/marginalisation/reintegration but were equally certainly not initiatory in the way that, say, the *ephebeia* was. Yet in spite of those reservations it seems to me likely that the ritual described by Pliny was indeed initiatory; at least, the evidence we have is compatible with such a hypothesis. A man – probably, as we shall see, a young man – underwent a rite of separation, left society and became temporarily a non-person, subsequently returned and, after a rite of reintegration, rejoined the community, presumably with a different (? adult) status. The negative imagery (wolf; in the wilds) characterising the liminal period is just what we should expect, given the anthropological parallels.⁴⁰ One aspect of the symbolism is particularly interesting: abstention from human meat. The ‘wolf must retain one link with humanity if his eventual return is to be possible.

(2) There are obvious similarities with the Lykaion ritual: the avoidance of human meat, the metamorphosis into a wolf, the period of nine years. At the

very least Pausanias and Pliny were reporting rituals which shared some of the same symbols. But were they relating different aspects of the *same* ritual?⁴¹ Perhaps the most persuasive account is that of Burkert, according to whom the Plinian version reflects a watered-down, 'civilised' form of the ritual which became confined to a single conservative family.⁴² On this view we should imagine an earlier situation in archaic Greece in which a whole age-group of young men were initiated into Arcadian adult society. Before they became fully-fledged citizens they were obliged to undergo a period of separation from society as 'wolves', i.e. outsiders. When they reached the age of full social adulthood they became true descendants of Arkas, 'The Bear' – Pausanias conveniently tells us that Arcadian warriors wore the skins of two animals, the wolf and the bear (4.11.3). Supporting the initiation hypothesis is the story (recorded by Pausanias, Pliny and Augustine)⁴³ of an Arcadian who returned after a nine-year lupine absence to win the Olympic boxing event: it was surely a *young* man who went into the wilds.

The only problem with this interpretation seems to me the nine years. We could of course take it as merely symbolic of 'a period of time', and leave the matter at that.⁴⁴ But if we take it at face value, and if we see the ritual as applying, at least originally, to a whole age-group of young men, then we have to give a reasonable answer to the question, 'What were they *doing* for nine years?' – nine years of 'das Leben als "Wölfe" in der Wildnis'.⁴⁵ It is not quite the same as withdrawing to the young men's huts for a spell of a couple of months before rejoining the tribe.⁴⁶ If we want to regard the Lykaion ritual as being originally an initiation ceremony for an entire age-group then we have to be sceptical about those nine years, at least until they are explained in a way which makes sense in relation to the real life of a historical Arcadian community.⁴⁷ In any case it is unwise to be too dogmatic about what happened on Mount Lykaion. We know, for instance, of a ritual there connected with making rain;⁴⁸ we know also that the opposition sunlight/shadow was important;⁴⁹ and it is difficult, and probably misleading, to try to incorporate all this material into a single ritual complex. But if we retain the idea of an initiatory rite of passage we have at least a very plausible hypothesis for understanding the logic of the central werewolf ceremony.

We have not yet finished with Mount Lykaion, for associated with it there was a myth. The most dramatically exciting account of Lykaon is in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* Book 1, but the most suggestive from the mythological point of view is in Pausanias (8.1–2). According to his version, Lykaon's father was Pelasgos, the first man who lived in Arcadia. Pelasgos introduced certain aspects of civilisation: shelters against the elements and clothing made from sheepskins. Moreover he stopped his subjects eating leaves, grass and roots, and introduced them instead to acorns. Lykaon continued the civilising process by founding a city and instituting games in honour of Zeus. At that time, because of their justice and piety, men ate at the same table as the gods. But Lykaon carried out the sacrifice of a child on Zeus' altar on Mount Lykaion; as

a consequence he was turned into a wolf.

One way of coming to grips with the Greek myths is to identify recurrent themes, and so to observe what Greeks felt to be important. A major theme in the Lykaon myth is the importance of maintaining proper relationships with the gods, and the dangers of not so doing. Countless other myths make a similar point: punishment follows all kinds of transgression against the gods, from failure to honour them (Hippolytos, Pentheus) to ill-advised rivalry (Arachne, Marsyas) to figurative or real violation (Aktaion, Teiresias, Ixion). More specifically, the Lykaon myth narrates the consequences of abusing hospitality, and here it resembles the story of Tantalos, another who was host to the gods at a cannibalistic feast. But Lykaon is a bringer of culture as well as a criminal, and the whole narrative in Pausanias is from another point of view the story of the origins of civilisation in Arcadia: after relating what Pelasgos and Lykaon did he tells us that one of Lykaon's descendants, Arkas, will invent agriculture, bread-making and weaving (8.4.1). However, the myth also makes clear that humanity's cultural progress is not unalloyed: part and parcel of the human condition as we know it is that we no longer eat with the gods.

There is a close analogy with Hesiod's account of what happened at Mekone, where Prometheus' attempted deception of Zeus resulted in a definitive end to the commensality of men and gods (*Theog.* 535ff). But the difference is as striking as the similarity: in the Lykaon story the rupture between men and gods is far more drastic. This becomes evident if we look at some of the variants – another fruitful way of uncovering the logic of myth. According to Apollodoros Lykaon's *sons* are the guilty ones, and they (except the youngest) and their father are thunderbolted (3.8); while Hyginus speaks of Lykaon turning into a wolf and his sons being thunderbolted (176). The implications of the equivalence between thunderbolting and metamorphosis into a wolf have been drawn by Borgeaud.⁵⁰ In the case of thunderbolting, Zeus' power is completely manifested (cf. the fate of Semele); in the case of metamorphosis, the guilty party is not simply banished from Zeus' table, he is banished into animality. Coupling the two versions we arrive at a doubly radical break between men and god: men recede below humanity, god's divinity is unanswerably affirmed. Only in future generations will human/divine relations be on a firmer footing – at a more respectful distance.

Another significant theme is the metamorphosis itself.⁵¹ Not only is Lykaon like a wolf, he *is*, permanently, a wolf. Here again is an enormously common pattern in Greek myth: a departure from the norm – often a transgression – is fixed for ever by a change into a non-human state, frequently one (as with Lykaon) appropriate to the nature of the transgression or abnormality.⁵² Furthermore the fact that in the Lykaon myth (as usual in Greek metamorphoses) it is a god who effects the alteration is worth bearing in mind if the analogy between classical and medieval werewolves threatens to become too insistent. In both cultures to be a wolf signifies that one has forfeited humanity and is obliged to lead an 'outside' existence. But the medieval

werewolf, perceived as being able to change his shape from the God-given human form with which he started, is typically represented as having that power thanks to demonic assistance. The conceptual background to medieval werewolfism is Christianity.⁵³

Any Greek myth should be responsive to an enquiry into its themes. But some myths, thanks to the accidents of survival and the character of the stories themselves, may take on added significance when seen in juxtaposition with a ritual. This is undeniably the case with the myth in question here, which exists in a virtually symbiotic relationship with the werewolf ceremony of Mount Lykaion. On the one hand the myth 'confirms' the ritual, giving it greater resonance. Each time a man leaves the sanctuary to become a wolf, that man in a sense *is* Lykaon: in virtue of the conclusive banishment originally experienced by Lykaon, the exclusion dramatised in the ritual is that much more intense (or so we may surmise – the emotions involved in a ritual are hard enough to assess in a contemporary context, let alone in one sketchily known from antiquity). On the other hand myth and ritual are *contrasting* symbolic languages, the one tending to make explicit and absolute that which the other leaves implicit and temporary. Thus the metamorphosis of Lykaon is permanent, while the exclusion dramatised in the ritual is temporary and reversible. One may note the parallel with the scapegoat: in myth the designated individual is killed; in ritual merely expelled.⁵⁴

A Modern Postscript

At certain points in this paper I have discussed the far from simple relationship obtaining between traditions about and empirical observation of the wolf in Greek antiquity. My invoking of modern zoology as a control on some of the ancient data may have created an impression that nowadays we have an accurate and tradition-free picture of the wolf. It is true that in this century the science of ethology has made quite extraordinary strides; and studies of wolf behaviour are no exception to this generalisation.⁵⁵ But knowledge of such matters is very thinly diffused. In the industrialised West, at any rate, the wolf is present largely as a residual folklore image. And in the mind as in terms of actual population it seems to be on the decline: in urban folklore, as the motorway has replaced the forest as the location of danger, so the phantom hitchhiker threatens to oust the werewolf.⁵⁶ But the continuing popularity of werewolf films and literature⁵⁷ perhaps suggests that this beast remains good to think with, since it calls into question the boundary between human and 'bestial'. Even ordinary wolves still cause public and media terror if they get out of place. Above all there remains a fascination – the lupine equivalent of the debate over cannibalism – with the question, 'Do wolves make unprovoked attacks on human beings?'⁵⁸ The evidence seems in fact to be that, while *rabid* wolves will indeed run amok and bite at random, normally wolves are too

terrified of man to attack even when hungry. It is of course hard to substantiate this, since it is often impossible to decide whether any given report, particularly if it is not contemporary, involves a rabid or a non-rabid wolf; and, to add to the confusion, feral dogs can easily be mistaken for wolves.⁵⁹ In any case, such cool evaluations of the evidence seem flimsy when confronted with a powerful folklore image. Whether that image will diminish or grow when all the real wolves have been exterminated is beyond even guesswork.⁶⁰

Notes

1. C. Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* (Eng. tr., London, 1966).
2. On the pedigree of this expression see G. E. R. Lloyd, *Science, Folklore and Ideology* (Cambridge, 1983) 8, n 7.
3. For general discussions see L. D. Mech, *The Wolf: The Ecology and Behavior of an Endangered Species* (New York, 1970) and E. Zimen, *The Wolf: His Place in the Natural World* (Eng. tr., London, 1981).
4. Cf. A. Dent, *Lost Beasts of Britain* (London, 1974) 99–134.
5. *Wolves*, ed. D. H. Pimlott (Morges, 1975).
6. Rewards offered in late eighteenth-century France are set out in A. Molinier and N. Molinier-Meyer, 'Environnement et histoire: les loups et l'homme en France', *Rev. d'hist. mod. et contemp.*, 28 (1981) 225–45, at 228; this is the only serious attempt known to me which offers a historical ecology of the wolf in a particular region. Bounties of £5 per head in Cromwellian Ireland: C. Fitzgibbon, *Red Hand: The Ulster Colony* (London, 1971) 37.
7. Here and several times elsewhere I have followed or adapted the Loeb translation.
8. For advice on all matters of wolf biology and behaviour mentioned in this article I am indebted to Dr S. Harris of the Department of Zoology at Bristol University.
9. M. Haupt, 'Excerpta ex Timothei Gazaei libris de animalibus', *Hermes*, 3 (1869) 8, lines 27–9.
10. See M. Detienne and J. Svenbro, 'Les loups au festin ou la cité impossible', in M. Detienne and J.-P. Vernant, *La Cuisine du sacrifice en pays grec* (Paris, 1979) 215–37, on the parallel with 'isonomic' distribution between hoplites.
11. See D. L. Page, *Sappho and Alcaeus* (Oxford, 1955) 205–6.
12. Connection between wolf and outlaw: Harry A. Senn, *Were-wolf and Vampire in Romania* (New York, 1982) 16, and J. Bremmer, 'The *suodales* of Poplios Valesios', *ZPE*, 47 (1982) 133–47, at 141, n 35 (bibliog.).
13. On this passage see C. Mainoldi, *L'Image du loup et du chien dans la Grèce ancienne d'Homère à Platon* (Paris, 1984) 25–6. (Mainoldi's study is careful and extremely interesting.) Apollo Lyk(e)ios: F. Graf, *Nordionische Kulte* (Rome, 1985) 220–6.
14. We may recall that the origins of Rome were perceived as lying with a renegade band of young men, led by the foster-children of the she-wolf – outsiders in co-operation; cf. A. Alföldi, *Die Struktur des voretruskischen Römerstaates* (Heidelberg, 1974), esp. 119–33.
15. Mainoldi, *L'Image*, 97–103, 127.
16. Wolves and dogs similar: cf. also Diod. Sic. 1.88.6. But the perceived relation between the two is complex and ambiguous. Although dog can be seen to stand to wolf as tame to wild, the tameness of dogs is problematic. On the one hand, they protect human civilisation by warding off wild beasts, and are domesticated to the extent of being regularly eaten (cf. N.-G. Gejvall, *Lerna*, vol. 1, *The Fauna* (Princeton, 1969) 14–18). On the other hand, dogs are potential killers and may threaten man (n.b. Aktaion). On dogs see H. H. Scholz, *Der Hund in der griechisch-römischen Magie und Religion* (Berlin, 1937); R. H. A. Merlen, *De Canibus: Dog and Hound in Antiquity* (London, 1971); N. J. Zaganianis, 'Le chien dans la mythologie et la littérature gréco-latines', *Platon*, 32 (1980) 52–87; Mainoldi, *L'Image*. N.b. also T. Ziolkowski, *Varieties of Literary Thematics* (Princeton, 1983) Ch. 3 ('Talking dogs: the caninization of literature'); and, for a brilliant analysis of a medieval cult and legend, J.-C. Schmitt, *The Holy Greyhound* (Eng. tr., Cambridge, 1983).
17. Dolon the wolf: L. Gernet, *The Anthropology of Ancient Greece* (Eng. tr., Baltimore, 1981) 125–39; F.

Lissarrague, 'Iconographie de Dolon le loup', *Rev. Arch.* (1980) 3–30. The attempt by Mainoldi, *L'Image*, 20, to explain away the wolf/trickery link in the Doloneia is unconvincing.

18. E.g. *Rep.* 416a, 565e–66a; *Phaedo* 82a. Cf. Mainoldi, *L'Image*, 187–200, and D. Lanza, *Il tiranno e il suo pubblico* (Turin, 1977) 65–7.

19. List of references given by Mainoldi, *L'Image*, 209–10, n 12.

20. Cf. P. Borgeaud, *Recherches sur le dieu Pan* (Rome, 1979) 30–2.

21. Aristotelian references: *Gen. An.* 742a8 (eyelid); *Hist. An.* 500b23 (penis); *Part. An.* 686a21 (neck); translations adapted from Loeb.

22. But see postscript.

23. Lycanthropy is not unknown to modern psychiatry, although it is very rare: see H. A. Rosenstock and K. R. Vincent, 'A case of lycanthropy', *Am. Journ. Psychiatry*, 134:10 (Oct. 1977) 1147–9.

24. G. Ronay, *The Dracula Myth* (London, 1972) 15, gives a figure of 30,000 cases of lycanthropy investigated by the Roman Church between 1520 and the mid-seventeenth century. On werewolf belief in early modern Europe see L. Harf-Lancner, 'La métamorphose illusoire: des théories chrétiennes de la métamorphose aux images médiévales du loup-garou', *Annales ESC*, 40 (1985) 208–26. M. Summers, *The Werewolf* (London, 1933), may still be consulted, though with great circumspection.

25. Galen, *On Melancholy*, ed. Kühn, XIX, 719; text of Markellos in W. H. Roscher, 'Das von der "Kynanthropie" handelnde Fragment des Marcellus von Side', *Abh. der Königl. Sächs. Ges. Wiss., phil.-hist. Cl.*, 17 (Leipzig, 1897) 79–81. Ancient lycanthropy: G. Piccaluga, *Lykaon: un tema mitico* (Rome, 1968) 60ff; M. Ullmann, 'Der Werwolf. Ein griechisches Sagenmotiv in arabischer Verkleidung', *Wiener Zs. f. die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, 68 (1976) 171–84; Burkert, *HN*, 89 with n 28. Burkert rightly states that lycanthropy is culturally determined, but his view that it 'no longer plays a role in modern psychiatry' needs rephrasing as 'a significant role'; cf. my n 23. Petronius: *Satyr.* 61–2.

26. Cf. T. E. J. Wiedemann, 'Between men and beasts: barbarians in Ammianus Marcellinus', in *Past Perspectives*, ed. I. S. Moxon, J. D. Smart and A. J. Woodman (Cambridge, 1986) 189–201. On the 'other' in Herodotos see F. Hartog, *Le Miroir d'Hérodote* (Paris, 1980); on perceived cultural differences between 'same' and 'other' see T. Todorov, *La Conquête de l'Amérique* (Paris, 1982).

27. Cf. K. Meuli, *Gesammelte Schriften* (Basle, 1975), vol. 1, 160.

28. See Borgeaud, *Recherches*, 19–23.

29. W. Arens, *The Man-Eating Myth* (New York, 1979).

30. *Eph. Arch.* (1904) 153–214, at 169. More on the excavation at *Eph. Arch.* (1905) 161–78; *Praktika* (1909) 185–200.

31. Burkert, *HN*, 90.

32. Bisclavret: S. Battaglia, 'Il mito del licantropo nel Bisclavret di Maria di Francia' in his *La coscienza letteraria del medioevo* (Naples, 1965) 361–89; M. Bambeck, 'Das Werwolfmotiv im Bisclavret', *Zeitschr. f. Roman. Philol.*, 89 (1973) 123–47; F. Suard, 'Bisclavret [sic] et les contes du loup-garou: essai d'interprétation', in *Mélanges ... offerts à Ch. Foulon*, vol. II (Liège, 1980) 267–76.

33. *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (Paris, 1580) 99.

34. For the werewolf-rabies equation see Ch. 12 of I. Woodward's lurid book *The Werewolf Delusion* (New York, 1979).

35. Equally beside the point is the attempt to explain the religious phenomenon of werewolfism by reference to iron-deficiency porphyria (*New Scientist*, 28 Oct. 1982, 244–5). One may compare C. Ginzburg, *The Night Battles* (Eng. tr., London, 1983) 18, on the need to explain the beliefs of the Friulian *benandanti* 'on the basis of the history of popular religiosity not on that of pharmacology on psychiatry'.

36. See M. Ninck, *Die Bedeutung des Wassers im Kult und Leben der Alten*, *Philologus* Supplbd. 14.2 (Leipzig, 1921) 148ff, for the role of water in mythical metamorphoses.

37. Death: R. Ginouvès, *Balaneutikè* (Paris, 1962) 239–64; R. Parker, *Miasma* (Oxford, 1983) 35–6. Birth: Ginouvès 235–8; Parker, 50–1. Marriage: Ginouvès, 265–82. Prayer, sacrifice: Ginouvès, 311–18. Prophecy, incubation: Ginouvès, 327–73. Mysteries: Ginouvès, 375–404.

38. There is a striking parallel with the rite of adult baptism in the early Church. Many fonts had three steps leading down from one side and three steps leading up out of the other side: the initiate thus crossed the font. (See. A. Khatchatrian, *Les Baptistères paléochrétiens* (Paris, 1962) nos. 83, 136, 194, 270 and 371.) The going down into the font was regarded as equivalent to Christ being placed in the tomb, and the going up out of it was interpreted in terms of resurrection (e.g. Ambrose *de Sacr.* 3.1.2; cf. J. G. Davies, *The Architectural Setting of Baptism* (London, 1962) 22–3).

39. The major anthropological influence is A. van Gennep, *Les Rites de passage* (Paris, 1909), with important amplification by V. Turner, *The Forest of Symbols* (Ithaca, 1967) 93–111. On Greece see H. Jeanmaire, *Couroi et Courètes* (Lille, 1939); A. Brelich, *Paides e Parthenoi* (Rome, 1969); J. Bremmer, 'Heroes, rituals and the Trojan War', *Studi Storico-Rel.*, 2 (1978) 5–38; Burkert, *GR*, 260–4.

40. See Turner, *Forest*, esp. 96.
41. For the different views see Mainoldi, *L'mage*, 31, n 11.
42. Burkert, *HN*, 88.
43. Paus. 6.8.2; Pliny 8.82; Aug. *Civ. Dei* 18.17.
44. Seven years as wolf: Giraldus Cambrensis, *Topographia Hibernica* 2.19; one year: *The Mabinogion*, tr. J. Gantz (Harmondsworth, 1976) 105. Nine years as a transitional period: Felix's *Life of Saint Guthlac*, ed. B. Colgrave (Cambridge, 1956) Ch. 18. Compare also Homeric 'for nine days ... but on the tenth ...': *Lex. des frühgr. Epos s.v. ennea, ennemar*; N.J. Richardson, *The Homeric Hymn to Demeter* (Oxford, 1974) 165–6.
45. Burkert, orig. edn of *Homo Necans* (Berlin, 1972) 105.
46. See B. Sergent, *L'Homosexualité dans la mythologie grecque* (Paris, 1984) 51–2, on two months as a common period for initiatory withdrawal.
47. Cf. J. Z. Smith, *Imagining Religion* (Chicago, 1982) 60–1, on the need not to abandon 'our sense of incredulity, our estimate of plausibility', in such matters.
48. Paus. 8.38.4. Piccaluga, *Lykaon*, interprets the entire cult activity on Lykaion in terms of drought/water: the first item in her subject index is 'acqua: *passim*'. But her desire to unify the heterogeneous data is over-zealous.
49. According to Pausanias (8.38.6) no person could enter the precinct of Zeus Lykaeos on normal, i.e. non-sacred occasions. If anyone, man or beast, did enter, he cast no shadow – in other words, ceased to be alive. (A variant also recorded by Pausanias makes this explicit: a person entering dies within a year.) Polybius (16.12.7) and Plutarch (*Qu. Gr.* 39) confirm the shadow story. Evidently it marks in an emphatic way the inside-sanctuary/outside-sanctuary boundary. But is there more to it than that? In front of the altar of Zeus there were two pillars 'towards the rising sun', with gilded eagles upon them (Paus. 8.38.7). The detail is enigmatic and, given the state of our knowledge, the sunlight, like the rain, must remain peripheral to our reading of the werewolf rite.
50. Borgeaud, *Recherches*, 45–7.
51. On this see in general the Budé edition of Antoninus Liberalis, *Metamorphoses*, by M. Papathomopoulos (Paris, 1968), and G. K. Galinsky, *Ovid's 'Metamorphoses'* (Oxford, 1975).
52. Some examples in *JHS*, 100 (1980), 30–5.
53. Augustine (*Civ. Dei* 18.18) ascribes all metamorphoses to demons, who have no power of creation but who change in appearance things created by God. On philosophical disputes about the status of metamorphosis in medieval times see Ch. 2 of Summers *The Werewolf*; and cf. G. Ortalli, 'Natura, storia e mitografia del lupo nel Medioevo', *La Cultura*, 11 (1973) 257–311, at 286f.
54. Cf. J. Bremmer, 'Scapegoat rituals in ancient Greece', *HSCP*, 87 (1983) 299–320, at 315–18.
55. Cf. works referred to in notes 3 and 5.
56. See J. H. Brunvand, *The Vanishing Hitchhiker* (New York, 1981).
57. See T. Gerhardt, 'Der Werwolf im Groschenroman', *Kieler Blätter zur Volkskunde*, 9 (1977) 41–54.
58. Respectable scholars take the matter up eagerly. Eduard Fraenkel, *Horace* (Oxford, 1957), put in a stop-press footnote: 'I can now add that during the exceptional cold spell of February 1956 a postman was attacked and eaten by wolves ... in the immediate neighbourhood of Horace's farm' (186, n 3). Peter Levi repeats the *topos* in the Penguin translation of Pausanias (Harmondsworth, 1971) 324, n 115.
59. Molinier and Molinier-Meyer, *Environnement et histoire*, analyse 45 attacks by wolves on humans between 1797 and 1817 in six French *départements*. Their guarded conclusion is that non-rabid wolves would attack children, especially those looking after flocks. Less often, adults were attacked; and, according to these authors, the attackers were not always rabid. But all adults fatally wounded or 'partiellement dévorés' were victims of rabid wolves. The authors estimate statistically that the rabid wolf is twenty times more dangerous than the non-rabid wolf.
60. Versions of this paper have been read at Ioannina, Bristol, Oxford, Swansea and at an annual meeting of the Classical Association at Nottingham. I am indebted to the many colleagues who offered advice and criticism on each of these occasions. I am also most grateful for help received from don Renato De Vido, Professor J. G. Davies, and the editor of this volume.

Orpheus: A Poet Among Men

Fritz Graf

The myth of Orpheus, in the form in which it entered European consciousness, is quite young: it was Virgil (*Georg.* 4,453–525) and Ovid (*Met.* 10,1–11.84) who narrated it in its canonical form. Their accounts look organic enough. Orpheus lost his wife, Eurydice, at the time of their wedding; grief-stricken, he went down to Hades, overcame all hostile powers through the power of his song, but failed in the end: turning too soon to see his wife, he lost her for good. In reaction, he fled human companionship, especially that of women, and his mournful singing attracted wild beasts, trees and rocks. Finally maenads attacked him, tore his body to pieces and threw it into a river; miraculously preserved, his head kept on swimming and singing on the waves.

A look at the earlier testimonies and the mythographers, however, shows that this narrative is a composite of four different themes:¹ the story of how Orpheus lost his wife and tried to fetch her back; how his music attracted animals, trees, and even rocks; how he died at the hands of the maenads or of Thracian women, and what happened to his severed head. These four themes account for nearly all the myths we know about Orpheus: a fifth major theme, one not integrated into the vulgate but, to anticipate, attested at the earliest date, is the story of how Orpheus accompanied the Argonauts on their adventurous trip.

The task of understanding the figure of Orpheus – a Thracian singer and lyre-player, son of a Muse and a shadowy king or the god Apollo himself – is not an easy one, in consequence of the inadequacy of our sources. It has, nevertheless, been undertaken many times and with widely divergent results.² This essay will, once again, attack the same problem. And though sketchy in some parts, it hopes to present a well-known mythological figure in a partly new light.

1.

The moving story of Orpheus' frustrated love goes back, as is universally

agreed, to a Hellenistic source.³ There is much less agreement about earlier forms of this myth. Did it always end unhappily, or was there a version where Orpheus succeeded in his quest? The evidence seems, at first, somewhat ambiguous.

The first allusion to an unsuccessful ending is in Plato's *Symposium* (179 DE), in a rather surprising form. The gods, Plato makes Phaedrus say, deceived Orpheus by not giving him his wife but only showing him an apparition, *phasma*, of her, as a punishment for his cowardice: had he not been a coward, he would have died to follow her, as Alcestis had done who died out of love for her husband. This variation certainly is Plato's – but he varies the canonical form with its unhappy ending.

The evidence before Plato is less clear. The first reference to the myth occurs in Euripides' *Alcestis*, performed in 438 BC. Alcestis, who chose to die instead of her husband Admetus, takes her farewell; in a long speech, Admetus expresses his grief and promises to love her for ever – and if he had the power of Orpheus, he would go down to entice Persephone and her husband to give him back his wife, and neither Cerberus nor Charon could keep him back 'before I would bring back thy life to the light' (357–62). The words are ambiguous, and it does not necessarily follow that Orpheus had been successful. One might even argue that Admetus hopes to have more success than his famous predecessor, whom Cerberus and Charon had kept back.⁴ Nor does a successful ending follow from a passage in Isocrates' *Busiris* (8) where the rhetor compares Busiris 'who killed the living before their time' to Orpheus 'who brought back the dead from Hades': what matters is the clever contrast, and Isocrates at all events overstates his case, since he makes Orpheus bring back the dead, *tous tethneotas*. It is not difficult to see that he did not mention the outcome in order to avoid endangering his *recherché* comparison.

A similar ambiguity surrounds the two references in Hellenistic poetry. Hermesianax (around 300 BC) ends his account of how Orpheus went to Hades for his wife with the words: 'Thus singing, he persuaded the great Lords that Argiope [as Hermesianax calls the wife] might take the spirit of fragile life' (fr. 7 Powell). The outcome is open, and since the poet narrates the myth in praise of another poet's love, as a mythical precedent of his own love and poetry, he needs must leave it open – especially if the myth had ended in failure. In the anonymous *Epitaph for the poet Bion*, its author wishes to be able to go down to Hades, like Orpheus, like Odysseus, like Herakles, and to sing before Kore (121–32): he is certain that his song will move the Mistress of the Dead – especially since she is Sicilian, as is his bucolic song. Again, it is the powerful song that matters; the poet might hope to be more successful than Orpheus – after all, his song is nearer and dearer to Persephone than Orpheus' had been.

There is, finally, the famous relief from the later fifth century which comes, presumably, from the altar of the Twelve Gods on the Athenian Agora. It represents Hermes, Orpheus and his wife. As to the exact interpretation, archaeologists are divided into those who see a 'tragical note', i.e. the final

parting of the lovers, and those who do not. For our discussion it is therefore not very helpful.⁵

There is, then, no unambiguous testimony to a happy ending of Orpheus' quest. What is more, it seems clear that at least the writers (I venture no opinion about the unknown sculptor) were not so much interested in the outcome as in the story – that Orpheus went out of love, in his living body, down to Hades, and overcame all the dangers there, thanks to his powerful music. It is a myth about a master-musician and, at least in Hellenistic time, a poet's poet, a mythical prefiguration of the poet. Even Plato, in his emphasis on the *katabasis* in life, which he devalued when compared to suicide, shows this point of view. His formulation – 'the gods only showed him a *phasma* of her' – is, then, a perfectly understandable abbreviation of the finale we know from Virgil and Ovid.

2.

We may, therefore, assume that the myth has had a relatively uniform pattern from its first attestation in 438 BC. As to its age and its possible earlier appearance, we simply lack information. Nevertheless, scholars attributed to it a hoary antiquity. It was reckoned to be 'the most significant ... element that can be compared to shamanic ideology and technique'.⁶ The problem, though, is somewhat more complex than this.⁷

It is not in dispute that among the most important tasks a shaman has to perform is the ritually enacted journey to the beyond to get information or to fetch back a soul; he does this on behalf of his community. He is helped by his drum, without which he would be helpless, and by his spirit, both of which he had acquired during his period of initiation. The myth of Orpheus thus could be viewed as reflecting shamanistic ritual – there are even shamans who use a stringed instrument instead of a drum.⁸ The changes – that Orpheus is a master-musician, not a healing priest, and that he acts out of his private love – are understandable as adaptations to the level of classical Greek culture.

Complications come with a whole body of stories aptly labelled 'The Orpheus Tradition', most of them from North American Indians, some from the Pacific rims of Asia and from Polynesia.⁹ In these stories, a man (rarely a woman) goes to the world of the dead to fetch back a near relative – wife, husband, lover, brother or sister. He/she overcomes the difficulties of this alien world, is helped by its inhabitants and rulers and is given back his beloved – under conditions, though, which may resemble those of the Greek myth (not to look back or not to touch the beloved on the way up) or may concern their life afterwards (never to strike her, among other things). In most cases, these conditions are broken (this is, after all, their narrative function), and the quest fails.

The attestations of these stories present some formidable problems of origin

and diffusion. Their closeness on both sides of the Pacific makes it likely that they originated from one source, presumably in Asia; in any event, the story must have existed long before the last Indian crossed the Bering Strait sometime between 10,000 and 2,500 BC, when we find the oldest Esquimo cultures in these parts: the Esquimoes show no traces of this story.¹⁰ As for its origin, the closeness to shamanistic experience has often been stressed, and Åke Hultkrantz suggested that its nucleus was the record of an actual shamanistic séance – although in very few cases, and never in America, is the Orpheus-figure a shaman, and he never succeeds through his musical ability.¹¹ One might thus doubt Hultkrantz's hypothesis; still, the similarity of the stories, not least their common difference from actual shamanistic ritual, is proof that the diffusionist theory is right. If this is so, and if the story goes back some millenia, then some doubts may be cast on the relevance of its shamanistic origin for the understanding of the Greek myth: it might have become detached from its ritual origin long ago and have travelled through the populations between Pacific Asia and the Mediterranean in the mouths of many generations of story-tellers. To the Greeks at least, it did not point to shamanism, but explored the power of music which could bridge the gap between mortality and immortality, albeit not to the extent of resuscitating the dead. Nobody in Greek mythology – not Herakles and Odysseus with their heroic *arete*, not even Asclepius with his *sophia* as a healer – was permitted this ultimate power which would have touched upon the very borderline between the human and the divine condition in a much more fundamental and devastating way than simply the descent into Hades by a living man.

3.

The second theme – Orpheus enchanting animals, trees and rocks with his song – is attested somewhat earlier. Simonides in a fragment of one of his odes is the first to formulate it for us; then follow Aeschylus and Euripides.¹² Again, it is an image of poetry and music surpassing the boundaries of human existence, this time the boundary between man and the rest of the creation. As Greek man defines his status as *brotos* compared to the *ambrotoi*, the undying gods, so does he towards animals: full humanity, according to Greek anthropology, was gained by overcoming the animallike condition, *theriodes bios*.¹³

For this story again, shamanistic roots have been claimed. In the Finnish poem *Kalevala*, the singer, blacksmith, and magician Väinämöinen attracts the animals by his marvellous song (*canto* 41), and parallels are found in North European poetry as well as in epics in Northern Eurasia, India, or China. A ritual background is possible: the magical attraction of animals through music before the hunt, one of the tasks of the shaman.¹⁴ But again, the problem is not that easy. The extant testimonies, at least those from poetry, show the pride

and self-definition of the singers reflected in the mythical image of the marvellous singer; there are, furthermore, possible Near Eastern parallels as well.¹⁵ Again, the shamanistic background recedes to a point where it is virtually of no consequence for understanding the Greek myth, and again possible ways of transmission other than direct contact with a shamanistic culture are at least conceivable.

4.

The next theme is the death of Orpheus. Two main traditions are preserved: in one, Orpheus is killed by ordinary Thracian women, in the other by maenads, mythological beings. The Romans, Virgil and Ovid, blend the traditions, making the maenads Thracian women – *Ciconum matres* (*Georg.* 4.520) or *nurus* (*Met.* 11.8), ‘mothers (viz. daughters) of the Ciconians’; Thrace, to them, is a country with mythical dimensions. A third tradition is local, and has Orpheus killed by lightning: it goes back, as I. M. Linforth convincingly argued, to pro-Thracian myth-making at the beginning of the Peloponnesian War.¹⁶ The maenads are attested earlier: Aeschylus in his *Bassarai* is the first to introduce them.¹⁷ The motivations for their attack vary, but it is always, in some way or other, the wrath of Dionysos which sends them (except in Virgil and Ovid who motivate from purely human reasons). The Aeschylean account is preserved in the remnants of Eratosthenes’ narration of how the lyre became a constellation. It had been invented by Hermes and handed over to Apollo (this story is known since the Homeric Hymn to Hermes), then to Orpheus; after the latter’s violent death, Zeus set it among the stars. Eratosthenes gave as motivation (in Martin West’s reconstruction) that Orpheus in his journey to the Beyond had a revelation which made him convert from Dionysos to Helios: Dionysos, thus rebuked, took his revenge. Hyginus in his *Astronomica* (2.7) offers a different reason: when singing in praise of the gods before Pluto and Persephone, Orpheus forgot Dionysos – this is a common motif, most prominent in the myth of the Calydonian Hunt, when Oeneus forgot to sacrifice to Artemis, who sent the boar to punish him.¹⁸ The other motivation is singular, but convincing: after the journey in the dark, Helios’ power might be better appreciated. It could have been Aeschylus’ own invention.

There are more reasons given in our sources for the attack of the Thracian women, but there is nevertheless one common theme. The motivations given by Plato (*Symp.* 179 D: the gods punished Orpheus for his cowardice) and Isocrates (*Busir.* 38f: the gods punished him because he told shocking stories about them) may be set firmly aside as idiosyncrasies of their respective authors; a further explanation offered by Hyginus (*Astron.* 2.7: Aphrodite, disappointed of the love of Adonis, made all the women mad with love for Orpheus and they pulled him to pieces when they tried to get hold of him) looks rather like a bad joke based on a well-known myth. The other

explanations agree in the fact that the women resented Orpheus because he kept away from them – either he stayed away from human beings completely (Virgil) or he assembled only the men around him or he even introduced homoerotic love.¹⁹ Attic red-figured vases from the 480s onwards always depict the attack by Thracian women, and never by maenads; vases of the same period show him singing among the men only – but in one case armed women lurk in the background.²⁰ This, then, is the vulgate version: Orpheus died at the hands of Thracian women because they were angered about his aloofness. The vases show that this vulgate preceded Aeschylus in time: he already knew a story where Orpheus came to grief in Thrace, at the hands of women. He also knew about a special relationship between Orpheus and Dionysos. The only such connection we know of is attested later: Orpheus is the poet of the Bacchic mysteries; explicitly stated in a host of later texts, this is alluded to in the still somewhat enigmatic bone-tablets from Olbia, dated to the latter half of the fifth century.²¹ The *Bassarai* brings this theme up to the 470s or 460s; a few vases attest it for the middle of the century (n 20). Orpheus is not only a powerful poet, then; his poetry is, at an early stage, connected with Bacchic mystery-cults.

5.

Orpheus is also always a Thracian. Three localisations are mentioned. A *physikos Herakleides*, not necessarily Heraclides Ponticus, Aristotle's pupil, connects him with the interior of Thrace, around Mt Haemus: here, according to Heraclides, in a sanctuary of Dionysos there were tablets (*sanides*) with Orpheus' magical recipes.²² The geographer Pomponius Mela (2.17) adds that Orpheus had initiated the maenads in the same region. More texts connect him with the coast of Southern Thrace, around Mt Pangaeum. Aeschylus in the *Bassarai* made the mountain the place where the maenads attacked and killed the singer (see n 17). Several authors call him a Ciconian: it is a purely poetical localisation, deriving from Homer's knowledge of this tribe.²³ Another tribe Orpheus is connected with are the Odryseans: they became prominent in the years between 450 and 330, when Teres and his son Sitalces founded the Thracian empire which was, during the Peloponnesian War, an ally of Athens. It was presumably during this period when this localisation of Orpheus originated.²⁴

But neither the interior nor coastal Thrace could show a grave of Orpheus, despite his presumed death on Mt Pangaeum.²⁵ A grave, or rather two graves, are attested in a third region: Pieria, to the northeast of Mt Olympus. The region is, in historical times, Macedonian, but Thucydides and Strabo preserve the tradition of an earlier, expelled Thracian population. Archaeology confirms this change in population and dates it to the early archaic age.²⁶

The central site for Orpheus is Leibethra, on the foothills of Mt Olympus.

The town possessed a statue (*xoanon*) of Orpheus, carved out of cypress wood: it had sweated when Alexander set out on his campaign, to foreshadow the sweat Alexander's exploits would cause historians and poets.²⁷ The town also had a sanctuary of Orpheus where he received Olympian sacrifices and which women were forbidden to enter. Conon, who collected the story at the beginning of the Christian era, adds the aetiological myth (*FGrH* 26 F 1,45). On certain days, Orpheus assembled the warriors of Macedonia and Thrace²⁸ in a building well equipped for initiations (*teletai*); when celebrating these rituals, they had to leave their weapons outside. The women resented being excluded. Perhaps also, Conon adds, they resented the fact that Orpheus was not interested in their love. The weapons outside the building gave them their chance: one day, they took them up, entered the building, killed whoever opposed them, tore Orpheus to pieces and threw the limbs into the sea. Inevitably, a plague ensued. The oracle which the Leibethreans consulted ordered them to bury Orpheus' head. A fisherman caught it at the mouth of the river Meles, untouched by death and sea-water. It was buried under a great monument, and a sanctuary and cult developed.

The sources of Conon are notoriously difficult to trace; our account is no exception.²⁹ Not everything in it is clear. Leibethra is well away from the sea; how then could the limbs be thrown into it? The river Meles, which washed the head out into the sea, is another puzzle: it cannot be the well-known river near Smyrna but must be a local stream, unattested elsewhere.³⁰ The importance given to the head is also somewhat incongruous: there are other stories about Orpheus' head, but there its role is more functional: it either gives oracles or causes exceptional musical ability (see below). Still, there is no good reason to suspect that Conon's narrative is fraudulent – and, as will be shown presently, its underlying assumptions are corroborated from elsewhere. It thus attests a cult of Orpheus and an aetiological story involving secret rituals of Orpheus for the local warriors.

A more complex account of Orpheus in Pieria is given by Pausanias (9.30.4–12). He starts by sketching the vulgate mythology of Orpheus, with a longer account of his death: he was killed by Thracian women who were angry because he had taken their menfolk away and roamed with them all over the country. The women only dared attack them when all were drunk, and they killed Orpheus. This is the reason why the Thracian warriors have to intoxicate themselves when they go fighting. This, of course, is just a slight rationalisation of a very archaic fighting technique, the 'Kampfwut' – an ecstasy or trance which the warriors reach by various means before the battle and which enables them to perform spectacular feats. It is attested for many archaic Indo-European societies, among them the Germans, the Celts, the Iranians and, later, Iranian Assassins. The important thing is that these ecstatic warriors always form secret societies (most prominently the Assassins): Orpheus roaming the country with a huge band of presumably well-armed men looks like the mythical image of such a society.³¹

Thus far, Pausanias does not give a precise localisation. But when he comes to the grave of Orpheus, he does: the grave monument, a column with an urn on top containing the bones of Orpheus, can be seen at the very place where the women killed him, close to the town of Dium, at the river Helicon or Baphyras, shortly before it vanishes underground. The reason for this disappearance is again the murder of Orpheus: when the women wished to clean themselves in the stream, it simply vanished. It might be that this is no more than Pausanias' own attempt to connect the myth he told of Orpheus' death with the monument near Dium – but, at any rate, he knows of a grave at this place. This leaves Leibethra out: in Pausanias' time it had ceased to exist.³² A friend in Larisa had told him why. The Leibethreans had received an oracle that a sow (*hys*) would destroy their city if the sun could see the bones of Orpheus; understandably enough, they didn't worry much about this. But one day, a shepherd slumbered at the base of Orpheus' monument, and the buried hero made him play so sweetly that a crowd of shepherds was attracted: in their eagerness to be as close to the music as possible, they toppled and broke the urn. Thus, the sun could see the bones. The following night a rivulet, the Hys, swollen because of heavy rains, overflowed and destroyed the town. It never was rebuilt, and the people of Dium brought the monument into their town.

This story is clearly an alternative explanation for the monument at Dium. That it was fetched from Leibethra is incompatible with the idea that it still marks the very spot where Orpheus died. Neither does the story square with Conon's description of a *temenos* and a monument under which Orpheus' head was buried; but Pausanias is talking about something which no longer existed in his time, and his friend projected the monument of Dium into that of Leibethra. The whole story is an invention with a clear bias against Leibethra, the most prominent place in Orpheus' mythology. Much earlier, Strabo had heard another story at Dium. The Thracian (Ciconian) Orpheus spent his time in the village of Pimpleia near Dium, acquired many followers through his music, prophecies and rituals, and became a political power, till some of those whom he had scorned (*hypidomenous*) killed him (7 fr. 18). This looks like the transposition of the usual story into another frame, that of political power play and intrigue. Dium, at any rate, had its own tradition as well.

There is more to this story. It is surprisingly close to the account of how the Pythagoreans (or, as other sources unhistorically relate, Pythagoras himself) came to a violent end in Croton. Pythagoras, as much priestly figure as philosopher, collected many followers, and the group gained political power, until their opponents set fire to their meeting place and killed many of them.³³ Strabo's story about Orpheus seems dependent on the Pythagorean one which is attested from the late fourth century and preserves historical knowledge about the end of Pythagorean politics in Croton.

There are other connections between Pythagoras and Pierian Orpheus. The

pseudepigraphical Doric *Hieros Logos* of Pythagoras, written in late Hellenistic time somewhere in southern Italy, opens with the story of how Pythagoras had gone to Leibethra to be initiated (*orgistheis*) and had learned from the initiator (*telestas*) Aglaophamus this same Sacred Tale (*Hieros Logos*) about the gods. It went back to Orpheus who had learned it from the Muse, his mother, on Mt Pangaeum.³⁴ The geography is slightly blurred: the author telescopes Pierian Leibethra and the Thracian Mt Pangaeum; he is not the only one to do so, and in general the Doric Pseudopythagorica seem somewhat hazy about the Greek East.³⁵ The important thing is that again Leibethra is to the fore: here Aglaophamus initiated, as Orpheus had before him; this tradition was then handed over to Pythagoras. Given this, it is not impossible that the story of the Pythagoreans influenced the Orpheus legend. It might even have been the same milieu of the southern Italian Pythagoreans who had developed the Pseudopythagorica which was also responsible for the story in Strabo. There is one slight but revealing difference. In the Pythagorean story, the enemies are political opponents; in the story about Orpheus, they are men whom Orpheus had 'overlooked': this detail must come from the vulgate tradition, where Orpheus had 'overlooked' the women, his murderesses.

Thus, two places in Pieria preserved monuments of Orpheus. If the place where a hero has his grave is really his place of origin,³⁶ Orpheus is no Thracian, but a Pierian. It is, of course, just possible that both Leibethra and Dium took over the Panhellenic myth of Orpheus and created cults and monuments at a time when local patriotism wished to glorify the past, and when they also wished to have a hero known all over Greece. It is strange, though, that in these legends we meet an Orpheus somewhat different from the singer we have encountered up to now: a leader and initiator among warriors, celebrating secret rituals in a *telesterion* or roaming over the countryside – in short, a priestly leader of a men's society. That should preserve traces of a local, indigenous tradition.

6.

But there is more. The story of how Orpheus built his *telesterion* and assembled the men has a parallel in the famous story Herodotos (4.94–6) tells about Zalmoxis, the Thracian slave of Pythagoras.³⁷ Zalmoxis, upon returning to his native tribe, built a men's house (*andreōn*), assembled the eminent men of the tribe, feasted and taught them that eternal life was in store for them after their death. To prove his point, he disappeared into an underground chamber he had secretly built. The tribesmen mourned him as dead – but after three years he returned alive.

The story points in two directions. On one side is Thracian religion. Usually, Zalmoxis is considered a divinity who acted as a divine initiator in a secret cult.³⁸ But it had a political side as well, alluded to already in the Herodotean

account – that he invited the most prominent men of the tribe (*tōn astōn tous prōtous*). Other sources say that he had been councillor to the Thracian king before becoming a god (Strabo 7.3.5 p. 298, after Posidonius) and that he was a lawgiver among Thracians (Diod. 1.94.2): his mysteries were no marginal eschatological cult, but had to do with the centre of power, and the priests who performed them were considered his successors and at the same time royal councillors – most prominent being Decaenus, the high priest in the reign of king Burebistas (Strabo, loc. cit.). The institution is reminiscent of the role the warriors' secret society developed into in the Iranian kingdom, where the initiated warriors became the closest followers and vassals of the king; the former secret society retained the political and military power of the kingdom.³⁹ An ancient etymology for Zalmoxis' name points the same way. It derives the name from *zalmos*, 'bear's hide', because as a baby Zalmoxis was enveloped in such a hide – but the *berserkir*, 'Barenhauter', is a Nordic ecstatic warrior clad in a bear's skin.⁴⁰

On the other side is the Pythagorean connection, well known and often discussed.⁴¹ Herodotos attributes the stratagem of Zalmoxis to the fact that he had learnt such wisdom from Pythagoras. A very similar account of a trick Pythagoras performed is told by Hermippus (fr. 20 Wehrli). W. Burkert concluded from it that Pythagoras had the aspect of a 'hierophant in the cult of Demeter',⁴² that is, again, of an initiator. The Pythagorean society was not only a political club, but also a cult association with Pythagoras as its head.

Orpheus, as we met him at Leibethra and Dium, is akin to both Zalmoxis and Pythagoras. But the Herodotean account of Zalmoxis cannot be reduced to Greek fancy along the lines of the legend of Pythagoras, as Herodotos already implies for reasons of chronology (4.96), because there is independent and concurring evidence for a Thracian divinity Zalmoxis. Similarly, the legend of Orpheus cannot be reduced to simple invention after the model of Pythagoras. It seems rather that Pieria preserved (although transformed) institutions and rituals of a warriors' society, and that Orpheus was connected with it as the heroic or divine initiator. We cannot know whether the origins of these institutions were Thracian or Macedonian.⁴³ One might even venture a further guess. Homosexuality can belong to this sort of background, especially to its initiation rituals: Orpheus' introducing homosexuality to Thrace might preserve older traditions than we had thought.⁴⁴

There is another trace of this same background. Ephorus (*FGrH* 70 F 104) tells that Orpheus had learnt his initiations and mysteries from the Idaean Dactyls on Samothrace, who were sorcerers and initiators. This group, centred around a Great Goddess, also reflects the structure of a secret society.⁴⁵ The art of Orpheus, it seems, was at least not incompatible with this.

Except in the account of Conon, the legends about the head of Orpheus are centred around one place, the island of Lesbos. Myrsilus, the island's historian, locates its grave near Antissa: it is the reason why the nightingales of Antissa sing much more sweetly than those elsewhere (*FGrH* 477 F 2). Other authors make it the reason for the spectacular musical ability of the Lesbians, without giving an exact location of the grave.⁴⁶

Three later texts are more circumstantial. According to Lucian (*Adv. Indoct.* 109–11), the head was buried in Lesbos, 'there, where now their Baccheion is'. Problems remain: it is clear neither which temple of Dionysos is meant (though H.-G. Buchholz suspects the one at Antissa⁴⁷), nor what the exact relationship was between god and hero. In the *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* (4.14), Philostratus tells how his hero visited the oracle of Orpheus' head on Lesbos. It had been closed long ago by Apollo himself, but if we are to believe Philostratus, the site was still visible. In the *Heroicus* (28.8–12), the same writer cites two oracles of Orpheus, uttered by his head 'in a hollow of the earth' (*en koilēi tēs gēs*), perhaps a cave. Both oracles are fictitious: one is uttered at the time of the Trojan War, the other is given to Cyrus of Persia. If we combine these data, we should locate the oracle in the Baccheion of Antissa, or rather, since Antissa was destroyed in about 167 BC and its inhabitants transferred to Methymna (Livy 43.31.14 and Pliny *Nat.* 5.139), in a temple in that city: both Lucian and Philostratus are writing well after the disappearance of Antissa. Methymna had a famous cult of Dionysos Phallen whose strange statue was carried around during his festival; it consisted of not much more than a head and perhaps a phallus.⁴⁸ Fishermen had once fished it out of the sea. The two legends are very close, the one perhaps modelled on the other; yet, the Orpheus myth is not devoid of meaning. There exists a whole body of legends about how an object was brought from the sea. It was always rather strange, and it always caused a cult with certain peculiar features to be instituted – in one case, a legend from Ostia, an oracle of Hercules.⁴⁹ At the same time, these strange arrivals inaugurate something new, not yet existing. The other story, how the head of Orpheus brought about the musical ability of the Lesbians, would thus conform as well.⁵⁰

The literary texts range from the early third century BC to the early third century AD. Somewhat earlier is a group of pictorial representations. A red-figured hydria in the Basel museum, from the 440s, shows the head somewhere lower down; to the left and slightly higher up is a bearded male with a wreath and two spears, bending towards the head. The rest of the picture is filled with Muses. The identity of the man is unknown, but he seems to be the finder of the head.⁵¹

Not very much later are two other red-figured vases. A hydria in Dunedin shows Orpheus' head confronted by Apollo and, again, surrounded by two females, the Muses. The head on the ground and Apollo seem to be conversing.⁵² A cup in Cambridge again has the god confronting the head. This time Apollo stands to the right, stretching out his right arm over the head,

which again is lying on the ground, towards a youth sitting to the left. The head addresses the young man who busily writes down its utterances. On the back there are again two Muses.⁵³ The same dictation scene is found on two Etruscan mirrors from the fourth century, with the exception that instead of Apollo and the Muses a crowd of divinities stands around. One mirror, in the Siena museum, has the name VPFE, i.e. Orpheus, beneath the head.⁵⁴

The Cambridge cup has been understood as the scene where Apollo stops the oracle.⁵⁵ Taken together with the three related representations, this seems rather unlikely: nowhere else is there resistance either from a god or from the Muses. It is equally easy to understand the Cambridge scene as showing how Apollo orders the youth to take notes. Notes of what?

Texts of Orpheus written down on tablets are mentioned at about the same time the Cambridge cup was painted. In his *Alcestis*, Euripides speaks of the tablets (*sanides*) on which the voice of Orpheus (*Orpheia gērys*) has written down medicines as strong as those which Apollo had given to the sons of Asclepius (966–71) – but not even they can bring the dead back to life. The ‘voice of Orpheus writing down’: it is a strange expression, even for a choral lyric, and the idea of dictation is not far off. The tablets, then, contain magical recipes for healing. This is not very far from oracles: oracles are, among other things, concerned with the healing of illness, both private and epidemic. Apollo is the healer as well as the oracle-giver; Asclepius heals through dream-oracles; another great healing-hero is the seer Amphiaraus.

There is more. In some passages in the Greek magical papyri, the performer of a magical ritual has to keep a writing tablet ready and to write down whatever the god reveals during the ritual or in a dream provoked through the ritual: what is thus written down is a *pharmakon*, a recipe, or an oracle.⁵⁶ The magician busily writing down what the god or demon dictates comes very close to the vase paintings. Furthermore, there exist numerous gem-stones with the representation of a dictating head and a scribbling youth, all from Italy, all amulets, dated to the third century BC. Furtwängler connected them with the myth of Orpheus. Today, archaeologists prefer to see the Etruscan demon Tages revealing the *disciplina Etrusca*. But since the mirrors show that the myth of Orpheus’ head was well known in Etruria in the fourth century, and the iconography of the gems is not far from that of the vases and mirrors, Orpheus might still be somewhere in the background – a magical Orpheus, that is, procuring amulets.⁵⁷

Euripides calls the tablets Thracian, and his scholiast cites the enigmatic Herakleides regarding a sanctuary in the interior of Thrace where such tablets could be seen (see n 22). This may go too far. But at any rate magical spells of Orpheus (which Euripides knows as well in *Cyclops* 646–8) have not much to do with the legend of Orpheus’ head on Lesbos. It would be advisable to separate the images from the texts. On Attic pottery, it seems somewhat easier to see the representation of a myth explaining well-known magical recipes, than of a local Lesbian legend in a form unattested before the high Empire:

Myrsilus and Phanocles, the Hellenistic sources, present it in quite a different form. That leaves only the Basel hydria unaccounted for. Its iconography does not fit into the rest of the series and could point to the Lesbian version or have another meaning, yet to be found.⁵⁸

Again, these legends have been connected with shamanism: there are shamanistic stories of prophesying heads.⁵⁹ But such stories are spread more widely than the narrow area of shamanism, and there are even Greek examples without any further possible shamanistic trait. Again, the evidence for an Orpheus myth with a shamanistic background is ambiguous, at best. Orpheus the magician and oracle-giver, the *mantis* (seer) as Philochorus of Athens calls him (*FGrH* 328 F 76), could as well originate in the rites and ideologies of men's secret societies: the Dactyls, the initiators of Orpheus (note 45), are well versed in magic, the members of Iranian secret societies were thought to be magicians as well, and the Germanic Wotan/Odin, who presides over initiations and ecstatic warriors' societies and whose name is connected with 'wuot', fighting ecstasy, is also a sorcerer.⁶⁰

8.

There is one theme left, Orpheus the Argonaut. Two comprehensive but rather late accounts exist, one in Diodorus Siculus, going back to the mythographer Dionysius Scytobrachion in the third century BC, the other of Apollonius of Rhodes at about the same time.⁶¹ In Apollonius' lengthy epic, Orpheus is represented as a miraculous singer whose art charms animals and all nature. It had been the wise centaur Chiron who advised Jason to take Orpheus among the crew: he was the only one to overcome the perilous songs of the Sirens. Aboard ship, he was principally the *keleustes* who beat the rhythm to the oarsmen; he was also the bard who sang during symposia, festivals, even the wedding of Jason and Medea. His prayer also dealt very effectively with the Hesperids (4.1409ff), his advice makes the Argonauts initiate themselves into the Samothracian mysteries (1.915ff), erect an altar to Apollo after an apparition (2.669ff), and offer the Apolline tripod to Triton in order to overcome the dangers of Lake Tritonis (4.154–9). He is, however, no *mantis*; the official seers are Mopsos and Idmon. Orpheus, once again, is mainly a mighty singer. When he sings a theogony and hymns to the gods, this reflects existing poetry under his name; both a theogony and hymns are known to the commentator in the Derveni papyrus in the later fourth century.⁶²

Dionysius is more rationalising and excludes most fairy-tales and miracles, as befits a follower of Euhemerus. The supernatural powers Orpheus possesses are his as a gift of the Samothracian gods whose only initiate aboard ship he is (Diod. 4.43.1). By virtue of this distinction, he stills the storms through his prayer to them (4.43) and gains the favour of the sea-god Glaucus (4.48.5–7).

Earlier evidence is scanty. In the earlier fourth century, the historian

Herodotos knows that it was Chiron who sent Orpheus, because of the Sirens (FGrH 31 F 43a). This episode might even be attested much earlier. On an Attic black-figured vase in Heidelberg (580–570) a singer is depicted, standing between two Sirens: he has been called Orpheus.⁶³ It cannot be totally excluded that on this Orientalising frieze, the juxtaposition of two Sirens and a singer has no deeper meaning. Still, the image is isolated, and the interpretation tempting.

Euripides in his *Hypsipyle*, the story of the Lemnian princess and mistress of Jason, mentioned Orpheus among the Argonauts; his name occurs twice among the extant fragments. He was the *keleustes* of the Argo, as in Apollonius; after the death of Jason, he cared for his two sons by Hypsipyle, and educated Euenus in music and his brother in arms.⁶⁴ Again, Orpheus is only the musician, though a valiant one. Pindar, in his fourth Pythian ode of 467 BC, gives the list of the Argonauts (v. 170ff). Besides Orpheus, sent by Apollo, there are Herakles and the Dioscuri, sons of Zeus, Poseidon's sons Euphemus and Periclymenus, Echion, sons of Hermes, Zetes and Kalais, the Boreads, and finally Mopsos, the *mantis*.⁶⁵ Orpheus is the 'lyre-player, father of songs, well-praised Orpheus' – again not much more than a poet's poet. The earliest certain representation, a metope from the Sicyonian treasure-house at Delphi, is a surprise: besides Orpheus (his name inscribed), there stands on the prow of the Argo another singer, whose name is illegible.⁶⁶ Whatever his name, the fact that at this time there were two singers aboard the Argo is confusing.

Orpheus, as far as the sources go, is a member of the group because of his one special skill, music, as Tiphys is included because of his skill with the helm, and Mopsos as the seer. The skill of Orpheus, though, has one special goal: to overcome the Sirens' song. The Siren adventure belongs to the oldest stratum of the epos, as Karl Meuli showed, antedating the text of the *Odyssey*.⁶⁷ It would thus be a fair guess that Orpheus had been introduced already very early, together with the Sirens (this was the opinion of Meuli), were it not that the second singer on the Sicyonian metope makes such a conclusion appear somewhat hasty. But even if Orpheus was a later addition to the story, eclipsing his predecessor, the unknown singer on the metope, he was included specifically as a singer.

This is at variance with – again – the shamanistic theory. To those who hold it, the voyage of the Argo is a shaman's voyage into the Beyond, with Orpheus as the leading shaman.⁶⁸ This is untenable. Neither is Orpheus the leader of the band, not even the spiritual leader, not is the trip of Jason and his crew a shaman's voyage. The parallels point in another direction.

It is well known that the list of the Argonauts varies from author to author. Like other stories of this sort, notably the Calydonian Hunt, it offered itself as a focus for different traditions. There is, however, a common denominator among the participants. They are young, adolescents rather than adults – *neoi*, *kouroi*, *ēitheoi*, as Apollonius often says. The very few older men among them

have an interesting position. One, Iphiclus, is the maternal uncle of Jason; another, an Iphiclus again, is the maternal uncle of Meleager.⁶⁹ In many archaic societies, Greece not excluded, the maternal uncle is quite important. He has to initiate the nephew, as do the sons of Autolycus, the brothers of Odysseus' mother, the young Odysseus.⁷⁰ Apollonius also says that many of the participants were sent by their fathers, and Pindar uses similar phraseology: this might be an old feature of the myth and points to the interest the fathers felt in the participation of their sons.⁷¹ Jason himself has characteristics of an adolescent during initiation, as Angelo Brelich showed with regard to the curious detail of his wearing only one sandal.⁷² But Jason and his crew are not just a band of initiates. They are the prince and his fellow-initiates. The picture is reminiscent of the custom Ephorus (*FGrH* 70 F 149) records from aristocratic Crete: the young nobleman, during his initiation in the wilderness, is accompanied by an older man, his lover, and a group of friends from the same age-group.⁷³ The erotic element is not wholly absent from the Argonauts either: among them, there are Herakles and Hylas, lover and beloved (Ap. Rhod. 1.131) or, as another version has it, the Lapith Polyphemos and Hylas (Euphorio fr. 76); even though these variations cannot belong to a very old stratum of the story, they fit into the common background. The boundary line between such a group and a group of warriors is very narrow, if they stand together long enough, as the Argonauts certainly do. And behind Autolycus at least, the werewolf, and the Arcadian Ancaeus who is wearing a bear's hide, appear again the Nordic ecstatic warriors who formed similar bands.⁷⁴

From another, even more speculative side, a similar result appears. Meuli connected the myth of the Argonauts with a familiar fairy-tale pattern, called after the Grimm brothers 'Die künstreichen Brüder'. A young hero performs difficult and dangerous tasks to gain a princess or a treasure or both, and he is helped by a group of specialists, often brothers – one runs swifter than the wind (compare the Boreads among the Argonauts), another sees miraculously far (Lynceus), and so on; Orpheus and Tiphys could fit into the pattern. Meuli derived this tale from an even more archaic one, the 'Helfermärchen', where the hero is helped not by human specialists but by animals. The structural connection is convincing, the evolutionary paradigm might be more open to doubt. More important, though, Vladimir Propp derived the 'Helfermärchen' from the scenario of initiation rituals. One might do the same for the structurally equivalent human version, and thus for the myth of the Argonauts.⁷⁵

Not a shamanistic background, then, lies behind this myth, but that of archaic initiatory rituals – more specifically, the initiation of aristocratic warriors. This background is at least as widespread as the shamanistic one, and it is preserved at the time of Ephorus among the backward Cretans. Just where Orpheus comes in, is less clear. As one of the specialists, his role could be very old, as Meuli thought. But it is equally well conceivable that he was added

later, at the latest in the seventh century BC. It is tempting to connect his inclusion in an initiation myth with the role he had in Leibethra, if only he were more central in the myths of the Argonauts. As it stands, his outstanding musical ability is explanation enough for the inclusion.

9.

Who, then, is Orpheus?

To the Greeks, he primarily was the most gifted musician and singer, potent enough to overcome the Sirens and the Lords of the Netherworld, to transcend the boundaries of humanity in charming animals, trees and rocks, to inaugurate the musical ability of the Lesbians, and of their nightingales. He was considered an author of theological poetry, and as early as Aeschylus he was connected with the cult of Dionysos. This connection must stem from the fact that he wrote texts for these mystery cults (later, other cults attracted him as well). Additionally, he or rather his head was the author of powerful spells – poetry and sorcery are not all that far apart.⁷⁶

Deeper down in time and structure, there might be some elements common to shamanistic narrations. But none is so marked that it presupposes direct contact with a shamanistic culture; all could have travelled as stories without rituals over countries and centuries. Much more prominent are elements which belong to an initiatory society of warriors, a phenomenon well attested among the Indo-Europeans and still lingering just beneath the surface of some archaic Greek institutions.⁷⁷ The Leibethrean cult, if we are to believe Conon, was among them. This might be another reason for his association with the secret societies of Bacchic mysteries.⁷⁸

Nothing looks very Thracian. Why, then, is Orpheus a Thracian?⁷⁹ The answer can only be tentative and sketchy. Orpheus, first of all, is not the only mythological singer who is regarded as a foreigner. Thamyras is a Thracian too, as is Musaeus (though he was perhaps formed after Orpheus); even the Muses come from Thracian Pieria. Olen, whose hymns Delos remembered, was considered a Lycian. Only Linos was a Greek from Thebes, it seems, though a son of the Muse Urania; the origin of the shadowy Pamphos is unknown.⁸⁰ Did all the more prominent mythical singers originate in non-Greek mythology?

The question, asked this way, starts from a wrong assumption. When a figure in Greek mythology is given a foreign origin, this does not necessarily mean that he was, at a certain point of Greek history or rather pre-history, introduced from outside into the system of Greek mythology. In the first place, it means that this figure was felt as foreign, strange to this system, at least in archaic and classical times, when most myths gained their definite forms. There are, of course, figures who really did originate outside Greece – Cybele for example, the Phrygian, or perhaps Hecate, the Carian: but their origin was

remembered because it corresponded always to an essential strangeness of these divinities and their cults – the ecstatic frenzy of the Metroic rites, the dog-sacrifice or the connection with sorcery and the dead in the case of Hecate.⁸¹ Other figures might or might not have originated in a foreign mythology – take Ares the Thracian or Dionysos, who was said to have come from Asia Minor or Thrace: both are already present in the Mycenaean pantheon, and it is impossible to prove or disprove whether they were introduced from outside or not. But it is highly unlikely that such an introduction would have been remembered through the Dark Ages: in historical times, they were experienced as strangers, their cults retained strange features – Ares, the divinity of the bloody and cruel aspect of war which is kept well outside of the order of the polis; Dionysos, the god who sends ecstatic madness which disrupts the ordered life of the polis.⁸²

The reality Orpheus and his fellow-singers belongs to is *mousiké*, music and poetry. Seen in this perspective, their foreignness must point to an otherness not quite congruent with the daily life of the polis which archaic Greeks felt in relation to poetry and music, and to poets as well. There are some indications of this, on different levels. There is, of course, Plato who puts poetic inspiration under the general heading of *mania*, madness (*Phaedrus* 245 A). But inspiration, as Penelope Murray showed, does not necessarily have such an ecstatic character; in a less violent form it is already present in the archaic age. The poet has a special relationship with his inspiring divinities, the Muses, which at the same time sets him apart from his fellow-men. Already Demodocus and Phemius in the *Odyssey* claim this relationship (8.44, 22.347–9); Hesiod and Archilochus had been personally initiated by the Muses.⁸³ Homer himself, the arch-poet, was blind: this is a symbol of otherness current in other contexts as well, no incidental biographical detail.⁸⁴ Poets, in the archaic age, aspired to a special social standing because of their *sophia*, wisdom, as did other extraordinary figures.⁸⁵ Poetry and music, finally, belong to special, sacralised occasions. The poets of old were mainly poets of religious hymns (Orpheus, Olen, Musaeus): religious poetry is sung during sacrifices, ritually marked off from daily life – see, for example, the paean sung by the Achaean youths to propitiate Apollo's wrath early in the *Iliad*: after the hecatomb and the communal meal, 'all day long, the young men of the Achaeans propitiated the god with dance and song (*molpé*), singing the beautiful paean' (1.472f). And outside the religious occasions proper, the prominent place for poetry was the symposium, another occasion marked off as sacralised by introductory and closing rituals.⁸⁶

No need, then, to look for a special reason for Orpheus' Thracianness. Neither his association with Dionysos or with other mystery-cults caused it, nor is there any reason to read his myth only in a historicising way, as previous generations of scholars did. Rather, his fame as a poet made him – or kept him, if he really was a hero or god of the Pierian Thracians – a Thracian: it is, we recall, just this role as a poet which we met in all his myths. As to the

background of secret societies we found in his Pierian myth, we cannot be absolutely certain whether this is a projection of his role in Bacchic societies or rather preserves traces of a ritual origin of Orpheus. But since Conon's account preserves genuine-looking ritual information, since the details in Pausanias fit in, at least in a general way, with what Conon says, since Bacchic societies are nowhere in Greece all-male groups but rather female associations,⁸⁷ and since, finally, according to some scholars the poets of archaic Greece show features which make them come close to initiators,⁸⁸ it seems plausible to credit Orpheus with a genuine ritual background in such secret societies.⁸⁹

Notes

1. The sources are collected in O. Kern (ed.), *Orphicorum Fragmenta* (Berlin, 1922) *Pars prior: Testimonia potiora*. The main mythographical accounts are Apollod. 1.14; Hyg. *Astr.* 2.7; Conon, *FGRH* 26 F 1.45; a remarkable synopsis of all the material is K. Ziegler, *RE* 18 (1939) 1268–80; the early testimonies are discussed at great length in I. M. Linforth, *The Arts of Orpheus* (Berkeley, 1941).

2. To give a sample: Orpheus a divinity of the Netherworld: E. Maass, *Orpheus* (Munich, 1895), still repeated by M. Guarducci, *Epigraphica*, 36 (1974) 29. A Frazerian priest-king: L. R. Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States*, vol. 5 (Oxford, 1909) 105f. The sacred fox, totem animal of a fox tribe: S. Reinach, *Mythes, cultes et religions*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1910) 107–10. An old 'Jahresgott' whose song symbolises the joys of summer (a very Nordic feeling), whose death, the winter: C. Robert, in his edition of L. Preller, *Griechische Mythologie*, vol. 2 (Berlin, 1920) 400. A historical personality, a Greek missionary among the wild Thracians: W. K. C. Guthrie, *Orpheus and Greek religion* (Cambridge, 1st edn 1935; 2nd edn 1952) 56. A shaman who had lived in Mycenaean Boeotia: R. Böhme, *Orpheus. Das Alter des Kitharöden* (Bern, 1970) 192–254. A Bronze Age Thracian known in Greece before the Archaic Age: M. Durante, *Sulla preistoria della tradizione poetica greca*, vol. 1 (Rome, 1971) 157–9. A 'mythical shaman or prototype of shamans': E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley, 1951) 147 – the most fashionable idea nowadays, see notes 6f.

3. The most influential study is still C. M. Bowra, *CQ* 46 (1952) 113–26, who thinks that the unhappy ending is the invention of Virgil's Hellenistic source. E. R. Robbins, in J. Warden (ed.), *Orpheus, The Metamorphoses of a Myth* (Toronto, 1982) 15f, duly repeats this.

4. Linforth, *Arts of Orpheus*, 16f, considers it the only reference to a happy ending.

5. Ample bibliography in W. H. Schuchhardt, *Das Orpheusrelief* (Stuttgart, 1964); see esp. H. A. Thompson, *Hesperia*, 21 (1952) 47–82; E. B. Harrison, *ibid.* 33 (1964) 76–82; M. O. Lee, *ibid.* 401–4; E. Langlotz in *Festschrift Johannes Straub* (Bonn, 1977), 91–112.

6. The first to connect Orpheus and shamanism was Karl Meuli in an introduction to the translation of the *Kalevala* (Basle, 1940); see his *Gesammelte Schriften* (Basle, 1975) 697. Much more influential became E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational*; after him, M. Eliade, *Shamanism. Archaic Technique of Ecstasy* (London, 1964) 391; then R. Böhme with his adventurous thesis, *Orpheus*, and most recently M. L. West, *The Orphic Poems* (Oxford, 1983) 3–7 (henceforth cited as West, *OP*).

7. The problem has become urgent because contemporary anthropologists, after a period of rather loose terminology, are bringing back the concept of shamanism to a narrow functional approach; see, for a short survey, J. N. Bremmer, *The Early Greek Concept of the Soul* (Princeton, 1983) 25–48, esp. 48, n 95.

8. See M. Eliade, *Shamanism*, 168–80 (drum); D. Schroder, in C. A. Schmitz (ed.), *Religionsethnologie* (Frankfurt, 1964) 312–4 (spirits); H. Fromm, *Das Kalewala. Kommentar* (Munich, 1967) 259 (string instruments).

9. The standard monograph is Åke Hultkrantz, *The North American Indian Orpheus Tradition* (Stockholm, 1957); for more see D. Page, *Folktales in Homer's Odyssey* (Cambridge, 1973), 15–18; G. R. Swanson, *Ethnology*, 15 (1976) 115–23.

10. For a summary, see H.-G. Bandi, *Urgeschichte der Eskimos* (Stuttgart, 1965), esp. 138–42. The absence of the Orpheus Tradition is all the more striking since both shamanism and eschatological accounts are well attested in Eskimo cultures; see, e.g., H. Barüske (ed.), *Eskimo-Märchen* (Düsseldorf and Cologne, 1969) nos. 8–14.

11. A story about Manchu shamans in Å. Hultkrantz, *North American Indian*, 192; the origin in an actual séance, *ibid.* 220–9.
12. Simonid. fr. 567 Page; Aesch. Ag. 1629–31; Eur. *Bacch.* 650 and *Iph. Aul.* 1211–4. The motif became powerful in later antiquity, see R. Eisler, *Orphischdionysische Mysteriengedanken in der christlichen Antike* (Vorträge Warburg, 1922–3) 3–32; E. Irwin, in Warden, *Orpheus*, 51–62.
13. For a summary see W. K. C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*, vol. 3 (Cambridge, 1969) 60–3.
14. Väinämöinen and Orpheus: Meuli, *Schriften*, 697; the ritual background, *ibid.* 693; the literary parallels in Fromm, *Das Kalewala*, 256–9.
15. B. Kötting, in *Mullus. Festschrift Theodor Klauser* (Münster, 1964) 211 (pictorial representations).
16. Alcidas. *Ulix.* 24 cites an epigram about Orpheus' death by lightning; the same story with verbal reminiscences in another epigram in Diog. Laert. *proem.* 1.4 and *Ant. Pal.* 7.617 which goes back to Lobon of Argus fr. 508 *Suppl. Hell.*; a prose account in Paus. 9.30.5. The interpretation in Linforth, *Arts of Orpheus*, 15f, with reference to his earlier study, *Tr. Am. Phil. Ass.*, 63 (1931) 5–11.
17. Aesch. fr. 82 Mette (cf. p. 138f Radt); an ample discussion in M. L. West, *BICS*, 30 (1983) 64–7.
18. The sources in West, *BICS*, 30 (1983) 66f.
19. Orpheus assembling the men: Conon, *FGrH* 26 F 1.45; Paus. 9.30.5; introducing homoerotic love, Phanocles fr. 1 Powell; Ov. *Met.* 10.83–5; Hyg. *Astr.* 2.7.
20. F. M. Schöller, *Darstellungen des Orpheus in der Antike* (Diss., Freiburg, 1969) 55–69; E. R. Panyagua, *Helmantica*, 23 (1972) 90–111; see also F. Brommer, *Vasenlisten zur griechischen Heldensage*, 3rd edn (Marburg, 1973) 504–7. One vase, ARV 1042, *inf.* 2 introduces Dionysos as well, see West, *BICS*, 30 (1983) 81 note 18; several vases from the mid-fifth cent. add a satyr to Orpheus' audience, Schöller 53 (influence from the stage?).
21. See West, *OP* 17–19, with the necessary references.
22. Schol. Eur. *Alc.* 968. Cobet had conjectured Herakleitos; Wehrli keeps the text out of his fragments of Heraclides Ponticus.
23. The Cicones in Hom. *Il.*, 2.846.17.73; connected with Orpheus, Ps.-Aristot. fr. 641.48; Verg. *Georg.* 4.520; Ov. *Met.* 11.4 (but *Edonidae* *ibid.* 69); Suid. O 655.
24. King of Macedonians and Odrysians: Conon, *FGrH* 26 F 1, 45; Odrysian: Suid. O 656; West, *BICS*, 30 (1983) 81, n 16, puts the connection too late.
25. The only testimony as to a grave in Ciconian territory is Ps.-Aristot. loc. cit., an epigram whose wording comes close to the one of Lobon and which Diog. Laert. gives to the grave at Dium (see n 16); the third epigram, the epitaph in Alcidas, gives no localisation.
26. The testimonies for Pieria in *Orphicorum Fragmenta* T 38–41, first although vague attestation is Eur. *Bacch.* 560. The expulsion of the Thracians in Thuc. 2.99 and Strabo 10.2.71, p. 471; for Thracian towns more to the North, see Hecataeus *FGrH* 1 F 146; for the archaeological record, N. G. L. Hammond, *A History of Macedonia*, vol. 1 (Oxford, 1972) 416–18.
27. Plut. *Alex.* 14.9.671 F; Arrian. *Anab.* 1.11.2; more in *Orphicorum Fragmenta* T 144.
28. Obviously a compromise between the mythical tradition and Conon's own historical and geographical knowledge.
29. See *FGrH* ad loc.; Henrichs, this volume, [Ch. 11, section 1](#).
30. See N. G. L. Hammond, *Macedonia*, 129, n 4. Guthrie, *Orpheus*, 35 opts for the Smyrnaean river and makes unfounded conclusions.
31. For a survey see G. Widengren, *Der Feudalismus im alten Iran* (Köln and Opladen, 1969) 45–63; A. Alföldi, *Die Struktur des voretruskischen Römerstaates* (Heidelberg, 1974) 33–7. Add the Assassins from Marco Polo, *Il Milione*, ed. D. Ponchirol (Turin, 1974) Ch. 31, 32–4; for the Celts also H. G. Wackernagel, *Altes Volkstum in der Schweiz* (Basle, 1956) 124–6.
32. The archaeological record for Leibethra contains only archaic and hellenistic finds; Hammond, *Macedonia*, 136 (if the site really is Leibethra).
33. Principal source is Aristoxenus fr. 18 Wehrli; see K. von Fritz, *RE* 24 (1963) 211–18; W. Burkert, *Lore and Science* (Cambridge, Mass., 1972) 115–18.
34. Iamb. *Vit. Pyth.* 146 = H. Thesleff, *The Pythagorean Texts of the Hellenistic Period* (Åbo, 1965) 164.
35. For the Italian pseudopythagorica see H. Thesleff, *An Introduction to the Pythagorean Writings of the Hellenistic Period* (Åbo, 1961) esp. 99–101 and 104f; geographical confusion also in Himer. *Or.* 46,3 Colonna; *Pieriē Bistonis* in Ap. Rhod. 1.34 is a poetical way of saying Thracian Pieria.
36. For the grave as the centre of heroic worship see already E. Rohde, *Psyche* (2nd edn Freiburg, 1898) vol. 1, 159–66; F. Pfister, *Der Reliquienkult im Altertum*, vol. 2 (Giessen, 1912) 510f. The maxim has, of course, no value for pan-Hellenic heroes, especially those of epic poetry: it is all the more regrettable that we cannot know whether Orpheus was already part of the oldest stratum of the Argonautica; see below, note 67.

37. For Zalmoxis, see A. D. Nock, *CR*, 40 (1926) 184–6; J. Coman, *Bull. Inst. Arch. Belge*, 10 (1950) 177–84; F. Pfister, in *Studies D. M. Robinson* (St Louis, 1953) vol. 2, 1112–23; M. Eliade, *Zalmoxis. The Vanishing God* (Chicago and London, 1972) 21–75; Burkert, *Lore and Science*, 156f; A. Pandrea, *Balkan Studies*, 22 (1981) 226–46; for an analysis of Hdt. 4.94–6 see F. Hartog, *Le Miroir d'Hérodote* (Paris, 1980), 102–26.
38. Hellanicus *FGH* 4 73, in a passage otherwise heavily dependent on Herodotus, states *expressis verbis* that 'he taught secret rites (*teletas kateideixem*) to the Thracian Getae'. See especially M. Eliade, *Zalmoxis*, who is very careful to separate Zalmoxis and shamanism.
39. See Widengren, *Der Feudalismus*, especially 9–43; Alföldi, *Römerstaates*, 34–7; from a different perspective, R. Merkelbach, *Mithras* (Königstein, 1984) 23–30.
40. Alföldi, *Römerstaates*, 46f; O. Höfler, in O. Beck *et al.* (eds), *Reallexikon der germanischen Altertumskunde*, vol. 2 (Berlin and New York, 1976) 298–304.
41. Especially by W. Burkert and F. Hartog, see above, note 37.
42. Burkert, *Lore and Science*, 119 (the citation), 159 (Hermippus).
43. The role of Artemis Tauropolus in the Macedonian army rests on these same institutions, see F. Graf, *Nordionische Kulte* (Rome, 1985), 413–17.
44. The initiatory aspect of homosexuality is discussed by J. N. Bremmer, *Arethusa*, 13 (1980) 279–98; cf. H. Patzer, *Die griechische Knabenliebe* (Wiesbaden, 1982); J. N. Bremmer (ed.), *From Sappho to de Sade* (London, 1989) ch. 1.
45. See Burkert, *GR* 280–3.
46. Phanocles fr. 1 Powell; Aristid. *Or.* 24.55 Keil; a similar story, but for Pierian nightingales, in Paus. 9.30.6.
47. H.-G. Buchholz, *Methymna* (Mainz, 1975) 203, 209f.
48. Paus. 10.19.3; Euseb. *Praep. Ev.* 5.36.1–3. See M. P. Nilsson, *Griechische Feste* (Leipzig, 1906) 282f; Burkert, *HN* 20f.
49. Discussion in Graf, *Nordionische Kulte*, 300–3.
50. Burkert, *HN* 201f.
51. M. Schmidt, *Ant. Kunst*, 15 (1972) 128–37 (a very thorough discussion of all relevant documents).
52. ARV 1174. Bibliographies in Schöller, *Darstellungen*, 69; Schmidt, *ibid.* 130.
53. ARV 1401.1. Bibliographies in Schöller, *ibid.* 69; Schmidt, *ibid.* 130.
54. Bibliographies, Schöller, *ibid.* 98, notes 10 (Siena) and 13 (Paris), see Schmidt, *ibid.* 134.
55. C. Robert, *Jdl*, 32 (1917) 146f. It became the *opinio communis*, see e.g. Guthrie, *Orpheus*, 36, despite some objections, the most important from Schmidt, *ibid.* 131, who separates the vases from the texts.
56. *Pap. Graec. Mag.* VIII 90, XIII 91.646.
57. A. Furtwängler, *Die antiken Gemmen* (Leipzig and Berlin, 1900) vol. 3, 254–52; *contra* R. Herbig, *Jdl*, 49/50 (1944–5) 113f; reasonable objections, Schmidt, *ibid.* 133f.
58. M. Schmidt, *ibid.* 132f, thinks the finder was the poet Terpander; it is a guess. She also thinks that the head was in a cave where one had to descend with the help of ropes, which would recall Philostr. *Heroic.* 28; but the finder does not have ropes, but two spears, as far as I can see.
59. Dodds, *The Greeks*, 147; Eliade, *Shamanism*, 391; the protest in J. N. Bremmer, *Early Greek Concept*, 46f, with ample parallels; some more in C. G. Jung, *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 11 (Zurich, 1963) 262–8.
60. Iran: G. Widengren, *Der Hochgottglaube im alten Iran* (Uppsala and Leipzig, 1939) 324f; Odin: J. de Vries, *Altgermanische Religionsgeschichte*, vol. 1, 2nd edn (Berlin, 1956) 499–502 (initiations); vol. 2, 2nd edn (Berlin, 1957) 73f (magician), 94–100 (men's societies).
61. Diod. 4.40–56 = J. Rusten, *Dionysius Scytobrachion* (Opladen 1982) 144–68; Ap. Rhod. 1.23–32 and *passim*; see K. Ziegler, *RE* 18 (1939) 1255–7.
62. P. Derv. in the preliminary edn *ZPE*, 74 (1982); hymns are mentioned col. 18,11; a theogony is cited throughout.
63. H. Groppengiesser, *Arch. Anz.* (1977) 582–610.
64. Eur. *Hypsipyle* fr. 1, col. III 8–14 and fr. 64, col. II 98–102 Bond. The Euenus story is an aition for the Attic genos of the Euenidai.
65. The epithet *euainetos* reminds one of the epithet used by Ibycus fr. 306 Page, *onomaklytos*: lack of other distinctions of Orpheus, or a common epic tradition? *Onomaklytos* would fit into a hexameter. See also n 71.
66. *Fouilles de Delphes*, vol. IV: 1 (Paris, 1909) 27–30 (description); vol. IV (plates) (Paris, 1926) plate 4.
67. Meuli, *Schriften*, 593–676, a slightly abbreviated version of his doctoral dissertation *Odyssee und Argonautika* (Basle, 1921); for Orpheus, see *ibid.* 567.
68. E. Robbins, in Warden, *Orpheus*, 7f.

69. Jason's uncle, Ap. Rhod. 1.45; Meleager's, 1.201; he is accompanied also by his father's brother, 1.191.
70. For Greece, J. N. Bremmer, *ZPE*, 50 (1983) 173–86; for a wider background, idem, in J. N. Bremmer and N. M. Horsfall, *Roman Myth and Mythography* (London, 1987) 53–6; for the initiatory background of the Odysseus and Meleager stories, N. Rubin and W. Sale, *Arethusa*, 16 (1983) 137–71.
71. For another possible hint of earlier traditions see above, note 65.
72. A. Brelich, *La Nouvelle Clío*, 7/9 (1955/57) 496ff, see also his *Gli eroi greci* (Rome, 1958) 220.
73. The classical account is H. Jeanmaire, *Couroi et Couretés* (Lille, 1939), Ch. 6; cf. J. N. Bremmer, *Arethusa*, 13 (1980) 279–98.
74. Autolykus as a werewolf: Burkert, *HN* 120; Buxton, this volume, Ch. 4; Ancaeus and bears, K. Meuli, *Schriften*, 601f. (without, however, connecting him with the berserks); see J. N. Bremmer, *ZPE*, 47 (1982) 146f.
75. Meuli, *Schriften*, 593–610; V. Propp, *Istoriceski korni volšebnoj skazki*, (Leningrad, 1946). (Italian edn, Turin 1972; French edn, Paris 1983; Spanish edn, Madrid 1984.)
76. Bacchic cults since the Olbia tablet, see above note 19; the literary sources, explicit since Diod. 1.96.4–6, in *Orphicorum Fragmenta* T 94–101 (Damagetus *Ant. Pal.* 7,9 would be earlier, but its authenticity is dubious). Eleusis since Ar. *Ran.* 1044 (F. Graf, *Eleusis und die orphische Dichtung Athens* (Berlin, 1974) 22–39; objections: Detienne, *Dionysos* 169f; West, *OP* 23f). For the archaic unity of poet, seer and magician, N. K. Chadwick, *Poetry and Prophecy* (Cambridge, 1942); according to J. Vendryès, *La Religion des Celtes* (Paris, 1948) 302, the Celtic term for seer, *ofydd*, derives from the name of Ovid; see also E. Bickel, *Rhein. Mus.*, 94 (1951) 257ff.
77. As M. P. Nilsson tried to show long ago for the Homeric kingship, *Sitzungsberichte Berlin* (1927) 23–40 = *Opuscula Selecta*, vol. 2 (Lund, 1952) 871–97.
78. For a Thracian representation connecting an all-male group and Dionysiac iconography, see above, note 43.
79. Although the vases depict Orpheus first as a Greek and only after about 450 as a Thracian, and although Pausanias was surprised at the Greek costume of Orpheus on the painting Polygnotus had executed in the 460s at Delphi (10.30.6), this does not mean that around 450 Orpheus changed nationality. Rather, the Greeks became more interested in the peculiarities of barbarians at about that time and wished to differentiate them better from themselves.
80. For the evidence see West, *OP* 39–61 (singers) and L. R. Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States*, vol. 5 (Oxford, 1909) 434–7 (Muses).
81. Cybele: M. J. Vermaseren, *Cybele and Attis* (London, 1977) 13–37; Hecate: T. Kraus, *Hekate* (Heidelberg, 1960); for both see also Graf, *Nordionische Kulte*, 107–15, 257–9.
82. Ares: a Thracian divinity, M. P. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion*, 3rd edn, vol. 1 (Munich, 1967) 517; C. Danoff, in *Kl. Pauly*, 5 (1975) 779–81 (import from Thrace in Mycenaean times): the Mycenaean material, M. Gérard-Rousseau, *Les Mentions religieuses dans les tablettes mycéniennes* (Rome, 1968) 38f, more in Burkert, *GR*, 57. Dionysos: the *Forschungsgeschichte*, P. McGinty, *Interpretation and Dionysos* (The Hague, 1978); A. Henrichs, *HSCP*, 88 (1984) 205–40; the role of Dionysos in Greece, A. Henrichs, in *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition* (London, 1982) vol. 3, 137–60.
83. Hesiod *Th.* 26–43; Archilochus *SEG* 15,517, col. II 22–40; inspiration in Archaic Greece, P. Murray, *JHS*, 101 (1981) 87–100.
84. Blindness and seers, W. R. Halliday, *Greek Divination* (London, 1913) 77–9; and outsiders, Paus. 7.5.7; see also R. Buxton, *JHS*, 100 (1980) 22–37.
85. Poets: H. Maehler, *Die Auffassung des Dichterberufs im frühen Griechentum* (Göttingen 1963); J. Svenbro, *La Parole et le marbre. Aux origines de la poésie grecque* (Lund, 1976); B. Gentili, *Poesia e pubblico nella Grecia antica* (Rome, 1984) 203–31; other 'wise men': M. Détienne, *Les Maîtres de vérité dans la Grèce archaïque*, 2nd edn (Paris, 1973).
86. There is no detailed study of the ritual aspect of the symposium; see meanwhile P. Von der Mühl, *Ausgewählte kleine Schriften* (Basle, 1976) 489.
87. A. Henrichs, in *Mnemei. Classical Studies ... Karl K. Hulley* (Chico, Calif., 1984) 69–91 corrects earlier misconceptions.
88. See Bremmer, this volume, Ch. 1, note 8.
89. I thank J. N. Bremmer, N. Horsfall and my Zurich colleague H.-U. Maag for valuable help and information.

Reflections, Echoes and Amorous Reciprocity: On Reading the Narcissus Story

Ezio Pellizer

Translated by Diana Crampton

n¹ Conon, Diegeseis 24

There is in the region of Boeotia a town called Thespieae, not far from Mt Helicon, where the child Narcissus was born. He was very beautiful, but also disdainful of Eros and of those who loved him. Whereas his other lovers eventually stopped loving him, Ameinias persevered, constantly pleading with him. And, because Narcissus gave him no hope, and indeed sent him the gift of a sword, the said Ameinias stabbed himself at the youth's door, not without first invoking the vengeance of the god. So Narcissus, contemplating his own reflection in a spring, and contemplating his own beauty reflected in the water, absurdly fell in love with himself. In the end, Narcissus, in despair, admitted he had suffered a just punishment for the wounds inflicted on the loving Ameinias, and killed himself. From then on, the Thespians decided to honour and venerate the god Eros even more, not only with public sacrifices, but also with private cults. The people of the town think that the Narcissus flower first grew in that place where the blood of Narcissus was spilt.

n² Pausanias 1.30.1

The altar within the city called the altar of Anteros they say was dedicated by resident aliens, because the Athenian Meles, spurning the love of Timagoras, a resident alien, bade him ascend to the highest point of the rock and cast himself down. Now Timagoras took no account of his life, and was ready to gratify the youth in any of his requests, so he went and cast himself down. When Meles saw that Timagoras was dead, he suffered such pangs of remorse that he threw himself from the same rock and died. From this time, the

resident aliens worshipped as Anteros the avenging spirit of Timagoras.

(tr. by W. H. S. Jones (Loeb))

n³ Pausanias 9.31.7–8

(a) In the territory of the Thespians is a place called Donacon (*Reed-bed*). Here is the spring of Narcissus. They say that Narcissus looked into this water, and not understanding that he saw his own reflection, unconsciously fell in love with himself, and died of love at the spring. But it is utter stupidity to imagine that a man old enough to fall in love was incapable of distinguishing a man from a man's reflection.

(b) There is another story about Narcissus, less popular indeed than the other, but not without some support. It is said that Narcissus had a twin sister; they were exactly alike in appearance, their hair was the same, they wore similar clothes, and went hunting together. The story goes on that Narcissus fell in love with his sister, and when the girl died, would go to the spring, knowing that it was his reflection that he saw, but in spite of this knowledge finding some relief for his love in imagining that he saw, not his own reflection, but the likeness of his sister. The flower narcissus grew, in my opinion, before this, if we are to judge by the verses of Pamphos.

(tr. by W. H. S. Jones (Loeb))

n⁴ Vatican Mythographer II. 180

The nymph Alcyope created Narcissus from the river called Cephisus; the soothsayer Teiresias foretold that he would be fortunate if he did not place too much faith in his beauty. The daughter of Iuno, Echo, fell in love with him, and, unable to win his love, followed him although he fled from her, repeating the last sounds of his words, and thus died of love. We have only her voice, for she was turned into stone and hidden in the mountains. This happened at the instigation of Iuno, because Echo often delayed her with her verbosity, so that she was not able to surprise Jupiter as he chased nymphs through the mountains. It is also said that because of her deformity she was hidden in the mountains so that she could not be seen, but only heard. Regarding the said Narcissus, for the extreme disdain and cruelty shown to Echo, he was made to fall in love with himself by Nemesis, that is, the Fate who punishes the disdainful, so that he was consumed by no lesser flame. So he fell exhausted from the hunt by a fountain, and as he drank the water, he saw his own image, and believing it to be that of another, he fell in love, and was so consumed by his desire that he died. From his remains grew the flower that is called the narcissus by the nymphs called the Naiades, who cried for the sad fate of their

1.

Conon's story (n¹), as is customary, begins with a general utterance, functioning to situate the narrative events in a particular space (Thebes, Boeotia, etc.); there then follows a description of the character and qualities of one of the persons who will be involved in the events. In this case, we find Narcissus, extraordinarily beautiful and at an ephebic age, yet disdainful and intractable in his amorous adventures. It is implicit that our subject (S1) swims against the social, or rather the underlying psychological current, which is safeguarded by the god who presides over amorous encounters (Eros); in other words a young man of extraordinary beauty generally should not be averse to the attentions of his lovers, as such an attitude constitutes a violation of the amorous *dike* sanctioned by the god himself.¹

The following segment introduces a second subject (Ameinias, S2) who, in contrast to the other *erastai* (lovers), soon becomes bored with courting the ungrateful *ephebe* in vain, and persists, with great constancy, in his desire for Narcissus. We may describe quite simply a second general utterance, whereby S2 is in disjunction with his object (Narcissus), then there is a modal utterance, because Ameinias *wants* to obtain the conjunction with his object, but in this story his desire is not realised. Furthermore, we find ourselves confronted with a second complex object, which in this case is a modal object: S2's desire turns both on a simple transformation of state (that is the conjunction with the object from which he finds himself divided) and a modal transformation, as Narcissus in turn is required to desire (or, rather, to want to do). In Ameinias' intentions and desires we have a conjunction, that is, the appropriation of an object, as well as a persuasive action: all set in motion by Eros, the heavenly figure of passionate love, who seems to constitute the addresser (implicitly or explicitly) characteristic of this type of story, and who in n¹ in particular, appears as the addresser of the final sanction, as we shall see below. Ameinias in love, then, desires to achieve a persuasive act, a transfer of the modality of wanting on to Narcissus; such a transfer aims to make the object of his desire *do*. In other words, it is a programme of seduction, which in our story is not realised.

The third segment is a performance, which at first appears extremely simple, consisting in the transfer of an object (the sword) from Narcissus to Ameinias, S1 having the function of addresser, S2 of addressee. Yet it is easy to see from the qualities of this transferred object (a weapon, an instrument of separation and death) that after having been interpreted by the addressee (according to some competence that is not made clear here) as an obligation (an invitation, an injunction, that is, a persuasive act), it sets in motion the following utterance, that is, the auto-attribution of death by Ameinias. A persuasive

action thereby is accomplished by Narcissus, who pushes his lover to perform a suicide programme – the lover, however, not failing to invoke the wildest maledictions against the young man before dying. Apart from being defined as a negative sanction against Narcissus' actions, this disillusioned lover's curse is also an illocutionary act of request to the deity, to sanction what has happened and to execute a further narrative programme, one of punishment and vendetta. The transformations set in motion by the deity are shown in the following two segments: the first consists in the realisation – at least partially – of the narrative programme, unsuccessful for Ameinias, to perform the transfer of the modal object (the wanting, or even better, a particular and complex form of wanting, that is, amorous desire) on to Narcissus. But because such a desire this time focuses on Narcissus himself (S1), we once again find a reflexive act, in which S1 attributes the modal object to himself. In the changed judgement of Narcissus, who is sorry not to have returned Ameinias' love, there is, then, a new sanction, and hence a second transformation, symmetrical to that manifested in the second narrative programme and consisting in the fact that Narcissus also kills himself. So we have a third reflexive act, in which someone attributes the object – in his case, death – to himself once more.

In conclusion: one unrealised and three complete narrative programmes draw into relief the very simple narrative structure of this story, which is articulated in the modality of impassioned wanting, and presents in characteristic fashion a specific recurrence: the addresser and addressee coincide three times, or at least the same working subject is the object of the action performed by itself. This redundancy, or better, this manifest recurrence, times three, has in the economy of the story the effect of showing the complex seme of /reflexivity/. In other words, a vast constellation of reflexive actions seems to be derived from the negation of reciprocity in amorous relations.

Although the names of the characters are changed, and the geographical location is different, story n² (Pausanias) appears to be constructed according to a practically identical narrative structure: it varies only in some elements of detail, as a simple analysis of those segments constitutive to both stories may show.² Furthermore, the story of Timagoras' unhappy love for the young Meles provides us with an interesting definition – both onomastic and morphological, as well as figurative – of the second contextual seme pertaining to these stories, as we shall see below: the winged figure of the god Anteros (brother of Eros,³ and represented as his counter and mirror image), a punishing demon (*daimon alastor*) of unreciprocated love, it must be admitted, is a most effective incarnation of the seme of /reciprocity/.

2.

We can see how these diverse figures, at the level of discursive structures, are semantically invested in the stories of unhappy love we have examined, and

how they are articulated according to semantic isotopies amenable to a consistent reading of all the possible variations. Let us begin with the mirror. Narcissus' falling in love with himself is provoked by the contemplation of his own beauty reflected in a spring, which serves as a mirror. Thus, the mirror image that reproduces oneself to oneself appears, a *visual* metaphor of reflexivity and of the double, of the coincidence of the other with oneself. In other words, Narcissus' mirror functions as a sort of hyper-mask in which the *I* and the *he* coincide, quasi-metaphor of the third person being compressed into the first person.⁴ Other interesting isotopies may be found in other stories relating to the theme of Narcissus, if we wish to account for its entire system of transformations and variations. Take for instance, the events in the following *logos* by Pausanias (n^{3b}), where the story of Narcissus is subjected to a rationalisation procedure (which is rather ingenuous but diffuse from the sixth century BC until about the beginning of the last century), that attempts to present myths as more plausible.⁵ Pausanias (or his source) perceives that the most intolerable and scandalous element of the story is that a young man should be so stupid as to fall in love with the reflection of his own image without realising it. He therefore proposes a different version, evidently aimed at attenuating such an absurdity. In fact, a passionate love for a twin sister occurs in the new story, hence the love is simply an incestuous love. His sister, then, is described as totally identical (*es hapan homoion to eidos*), which accentuates the fact that this is an intentional search for identity: 'they dressed in similar clothes, they wore their hair in the same way'. Here, then, appears /gemellarity/, which evidently functions as genetic identity, corresponding to a physical difference, which in this case is one of gender. Here too, a form of 'specularity' is repeated in the moment of searching for similarity in the love object, which may tend towards total identity with oneself; one attempts to short-circuit transitivity on to the other, and thereby to deny the difference in a sort of compression of the reciprocal into the reflexive. The mirror (reflection of the spring) here is relegated to the lower level of *aide-mémoire*, of small consolation for the loss of the loved object, but it must be said that in this love between twins, 'specularity' and reflexivity are definitely present.⁶ Both the identical clothes and the identical hairstyle attempt to elide the sexual differences between male and female; the denial of any form of difference is notable. Furthermore, even Eros and Anteros are brothers (although not twins); they are complementary, to the extent that the growth of one is impossible without the presence and reciprocal growth of the other, as recounted by Themistius.⁷

3.

Echo, the wood nymph (I chose, somewhat randomly, the story found in *Vatican Mythographer* 11.180). Version n⁴ is by far the best known throughout

the European cultural tradition, thanks to Ovid, to Latin and medieval mythographers and to Boccaccio. It also spread during the Renaissance (Natalis Comes, etc.) to influence the painting, the music and the literature of subsequent centuries. This story is constructed in such a way as to draw clearly into relief the coherence and homogeneity of the ‘Narcissus story’ in its entire system of variations, and it permits us to see how narrative mechanisms function, generating different versions of the stories, centring on a definite character – or, if you like, to see how the transformations of a theme are organised diachronically, over a long period of time. In version n⁴, the figure of Ameinias, the unfortunate *erastes*, does not exist any more; hence the element of the homosexual relationship disappears. The person who plays the actantial role corresponding to that of the unhappy lover (Ameinias or Timagoras in n¹ or n²), going more or less along the same ‘figurative path’ (*parcours figuratif*), is now a nymph, of the female sex (remember the appearance of the sister in n^{3b}), called, as everyone knows, Echo. In this nymph’s name and virtues, it is almost too easy to see her distinctive characteristics, that is to say, /vocality/ and, moreover, /reflexivity/. In other words, the unhappy nymph in love, described by Ovid (by verbal games that today may appear to be in bad taste⁸) as a voice without a presence, and who identically repeats the last syllables presented to her, is none other than ‘specular’ vocality. This reflected vocality thereby pertains, at this level of common isotopy, to preceding stories, to which, however (even in its transformations, and indeed thanks to them), it adds only the seme of /vocality/.

It therefore seems possible to conclude that a story, subjected to variations in its enunciative modality (or simply narrated in a different cultural context) can generate, in itself, several of its own variants, simply by amplifying, along a homogeneous axis, the choice of relevant semantic traits. This must be exactly what happened in our case, because Echo’s story seems indeed to be constructed successively (by the work of a hellenistic Alexandrian poet from which may derive Ovid’s story, or by Ovid himself), and apparently was inspired by a preceding tale about Narcissus in which there was no trace of vocal reflexivity, but in which appeared the optic reflexivity of the mirror. The complex seme of /reflexivity/, in a certain sense, may have generated this variant, simply transmuting the optic on to the vocal axis. As we have seen, something similar occurred in the Pausanias version (n^{3b}), where ‘specularity’ and ‘love of the same’, attempting to ‘rationalise’ the absurdity of the myth, together produced the figure of the twin sister.

4.

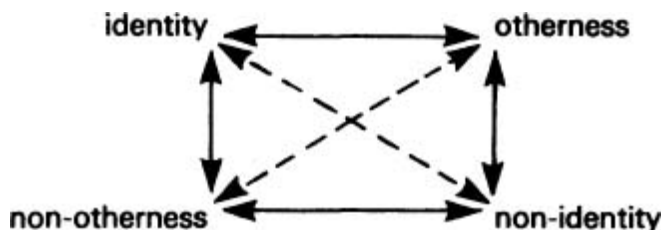
A powerful name: Plato. If we now look through the vast amount of material offered us by the *imaginaire* of ancient Greece, searching for a figure that symmetrically unifies the traits of complementarities, of the double pressed

into one, of reciprocity that compresses itself into unity, of a sort of 'specularity' where the mirror seems to join itself to the reflected image (rather like the child who moves towards the mirror to the point of touching it, pressing his or her nose to it), we note that this figure indeed exists, even if it is an effort to imagine it; the result, once visualised, may be decidedly monstrous. The figure we seek is described in Plato, *Symposium* 180 *et seq.*, in the famous story of Aristophanes about the origin of love. Once, Aristophanes says, men had roundish bodies, with four hands and four legs, two sexual parts, two faces attached to one head, and four ears. There were three genders, male, female, and *androgynos*, gender being determined according to whether these strange beings had two male sexual parts, two female sexual parts, or one male and one female part. And because these individuals, who were so complete in themselves, were too self-confident and somewhat truculent, Zeus had to cut them in half. He then pulled the skin over the wound, tying it up at the point that is now the navel, and begged Apollo to twist the head so that it faced in the same direction as the cut. Finally, because these halves had some problems copulating – as one might imagine – Zeus also caused the sexual parts to be displaced to the front. From then on, these halves looked for each other, attempting to join themselves together again, desperately looking for their lost unity and original identity.

The platonic myth of the *androgynos* is too well known to require repetition of all its details. In any case, one must recognise that this famous figurative representation of a coincidence of the reciprocal in the reflexive reveals itself as highly pertinent to the entire system of meaning that we have tried to reconstruct in the preceding stories. Moreover, it provides an extremely vivid picture of how it is possible, via the figures of the *imaginaire*, to reconcile somehow the unity, the identity, the totality of the individual with complementariness, 'specularity', or duplicity – with, in a word, 'otherness'.⁹

An apparently clearly articulated underlying system can be perceived through this series of vivid representations, whether they are narrative or not. This system seems to be constructed according to a form of logic. We can see delineated, for example, in the very linguistic formulation of the narrative discourse, the specific function of some grammatical categories – for example the function of the reflexive pronoun *heautos*, or the reciprocal adjective *allelous*, which is formed by doubling *allos*, 'twice other', and has no nominative. These grammatical forms are, not surprisingly, repeated several times, not only in the story of the *androgynos*, but also in the other stories examined. Furthermore, we can see how the figurative – or narrative – exploration of passionate attitudes (love, passion *par excellence*) renders operative various possibilities of *rapprochement* and juxtaposition of the two principal verbal diatheses, the active – which the ancient Indian grammarians called *parasmaipadam*, 'word for an other' – and the medium – called *atmanepadam*, 'word for itself' – whereas the passive diathesis is secondary, simply the active seen from the point of view of the object. Finally, a general

overview of this system of narrative representations shows, it seems to me, the articulation of some logical categories, and reveals the opposition /identity/v. /otherness/, which may be represented schematically by a Greimasian *carré*, in which also are organised the *contradictioires* (/non-identity/v. /non-otherness/ in the axis of the *sub-contraires*):



If general reflection on passionate love seems above all to draw into relief the problem of reconciling oppositions of the two contraries – that is, of defining the possible relations between the experience of the self and the recognition of the other – it is possible also to situate along the inferior axis (called that of the sub-contraries) some hypothetical and imaginary possibilities of different types of intermediate orientations. Such possibilities include the figure of the twin sister, who is not identical to Narcissus although she is of the same blood and similar to him, and also the figure of the *androgynos*, from whom it is possible to construct a monstrous image (which is neither the identical nor the other), simply by exploiting the possibilities intrinsic to the notion of symmetry. We should note that each of the two parts of the *androgynos* is called by Plato *symbolon*; certainly not in the actual sense of the word, but in the original (etymological) meaning of ‘one part of a whole, divided into two, which may be made to coincide by putting it together (*symballo*) with the other half’, as is possible with the two parts of a coin, or with pieces of a stick broken in two.

5.

The narrative theme explored here has taken us a long way and could take us even further. I have endeavoured to show some of the rules of the game that generate these representations, articulating their narrative manifestations, in an attempt to conclude whether it is possible to identify some form of logic at the basis of such rules. It is possible to conclude tentatively that, through the figurative and discursive exploration of the categories dealing with passion and lack of reciprocity, indifference, desperation, reflexive love followed again by more despair and remorse, etc., that is, dealing with a series of euphoric, aphoric and dysphoric states and actions, these stories attempt to express a vast reflection that focuses on the definition of the self and the other, on

reflexivity, complementariness and amorous reciprocity. And it is precisely passionate love that seems to function as the privileged operator of those transformations that reveal the meaning – or at least one meaning – shared by all these stories: the definition of the correct orientation of passionate attitudes in interpersonal relationships. This, then, is the ‘moral of the story’, whereby the winged figure of the *daimon* Anteros, together with that of the unhappy *androgynos* seems, on its own, to be the most effective metaphoric image.

In conclusion, I would like to examine another short passage from Plato, from the *Phaedrus*, another dialogue mainly dedicated to examining the passion of love (255 c-e). Here Plato unites, in a rather impressive manner, a large number of the figurative elements that we have found scattered here and there in the course of our inquiry, principally using a metaphorical system, the similarities of which to that system revealed by the examination of the Narcissus stories are too strong to be mere coincidence or ‘free invention’ of the Athenian philosopher. Having ascertained that amorous desire is like a *rheuma*, or current that flows from the loved object, Plato adds that this current of beauty, like a breath or an *echo* (*hoion pneuma e tis ekho*) reflected from a smooth and solid surface, bounces back to the point of origin, returning to the loved one through the eyes, in a look. He then continues ‘and like someone who has contracted an eye disease from someone else, he cannot explain how, but without realising it, sees himself in the loved one, *as in a mirror* [*hosper en katoptroi*]’. And when the lover is far away, the loved one, now also in love in turn, ‘desires and is desired, bearing *anteros* as the reflected image of *eros*’ that is, he perceives the effects of passionate love in terms of ‘specular’ reciprocity.

Plato is, without doubt, principally interested in defining the *other* by means of studying the effects love produces on the self, whereas the preceding accounts attempt rather to demonstrate the disastrous effects of refusing reciprocity, which produces a closure in the narcissistic circle of the self. One realises, however, that in this impressive passage of Plato’s, the reappearance of the figure of *anteros*, of amorous reciprocity, of the self who merges with the other and then returns to the self, of this finding-once-more with this bounce-back the image of the echo and the mirror, serves as a summary, as an inventory of the elements that constitute the system of meaning on which is based the theme of Narcissus in all its variations and narrative manifestations. We can now follow it through a long tradition, leading from Conon to Pausanias, from Ovid through the medieval mythographers and Boccaccio to Natalis Comes, from Calderòn to Scarlatti, and hence (why not?) to Sigmund Freud and his followers. The deep structures on which this has been articulated, however, were already present in the mind of the philosopher who not infrequently amused himself by telling certain ‘myths’ that were no longer myths, but rather intentionally symbolic systems, elaborated in the space of very rich and organised thought, just as they had been present in the *imaginaire* that generated these stories in an unspecified and unspecifiable

epoch, certainly before the time of Plato himself.

After having followed the tortuous events of these stories – or rather, having attempted to explain their mechanisms – I still have the impression that the history of many narrative themes that have attained greater fame in our culture, and therefore a consistent part of the history of literature itself, are perhaps (to paraphrase J. L. Borges) no more than ‘the history of differing intonations of some metaphors’.¹⁰

Notes

1. This rule has been illustrated well by Bruno Gentili, ‘Il “letto insaziato” di Medea e il tema dell’*adikia* a livello amoroso nei lirici (Saffo, Teognide) e nella Medea di Euripide’, *Studi Class. Or.*, 21 (1972) 60–72; p. 63: ‘If respect for *dike* necessarily demands that the lover should in his turn be loved in an indissoluble chain of faithfulness and reciprocal loyalty, violation of this rule (*adikia*) in turn necessarily constitutes a sin which must be expiated’ (emphasis in text); p. 64: ‘... sooner or later whoever rejects the love of the lover will pay the price for his own *adikia*’. On the use of the couplet *dike/adikia* in the language of love, see also Maria G. Bonanno, ‘Osservazioni sul tema della “giusta” reciprocità amorosa da Saffo ai comici’, *Quad. Urb. Cult. Class.*, 16 (1973) 110–20, M. Vetta, ‘La “giovinezza giusta” di Trasibulo: Pind. Pyth. VI 48’, *Quad. Urb. Cult. Class.*, n.s., 2 (1979) 87–90, and my ‘La donna del mare. La *dike* amorosa “assente” nel giambico di Semonide sopra le donne, vv. 27–42’, also in *Quad. Urb. Cult. Class.*, n.s., 3 (1979) 29–36. On the forms of *eros* in Greece see also my *Favole d’identità – Favole di paura* (Rome, 1982), and the very useful volume edited by C. Calame, *L’amore in Grecia* (Rome-Bari, 1983).

2. For an introduction to the analytical method used in this article, see J. Courtés, *Sémiotique narrative et discursive* (Paris, 1976); Groupe d’Entrevernes (various authors), *Analyse sémiotique des textes* (Lyons, 1979); A. J. Greimas, *Du sens II. Essais sémiotiques* (Paris, 1983).

3. The rather facile psychoanalytic approach of D. Braunschweig and M. Fain, *Eros et Antéros. Reflections psychanalytiques sur la sexualité* (Paris, 1971) 139–158, to the function of these two *daimones* does not seem very useful. An enigmatic *Antéros* may be found in the singular sonnet of Gerard de Nerval’s *Chimères*; see the fine analysis by J. Geninasca, *Analyse structurale des Chimères de Nerval* (Neuchâtel, 1971) 38 and 223–36. On the ephebic *eros* in mythical stories, cf. B. Sergent, *L’Homosexualité dans la mythologie grecque* (Paris, 1984) 97–123, 210, which provides a rich bibliography on this theme; also the little-known study by C. Diano, ‘L’eros greco’, in *Saggezza e poetiche degli antichi* (Vicenza, 1968) 167–83 = *Ulisse*, 18 (1953) 698 et seq.

4. See the interesting reflections of L. Marin, ‘Masque et portrait: sur l’opérateur “masque” dans quelques textes du XVII^{ème} siècle français’, in *Atti del Convegno internazionale ‘Nel senso della maschera: Au sens du masque’*, Montecatini, 15–17 October 1981, forthcoming. For mirror effects in painting, cf. Caterina Limentani Virdis, *Il quadro e il suo doppio. Effetti di specularità narrativa nella pittura fiamminga e olandese* (Modena, 1981) (brought to my attention by Oddone Longo) and in general J. Baltrušaitis, *Le miroir: révélations, science-fiction et fallacies* (Paris, 1979). On the mirror and mask in Greek mythology and culture, the reflections by J.-P. Vernant in the *Annuaire du Collège de France 1979–80. Résumé des cours et travaux*, 453–66, have, as always, been most stimulating for me.

5. For Pausanias’ attitude to myth see P. Veyne, *Les Grecs ont-ils cru à leurs mythes?* (Paris, 1983) 105–12 and *passim*.

6. The bonds of reciprocity and ‘specularity’ that are formed in the psychology of two twins (in this case both male) are remarkably perceived and described in the novel by Michel Tournier, *Les Météores* (Paris, 1975).

7. Cf. Themist. *Orat.* 24, 305 a-b: ‘O Aphrodite, your true son Eros may perhaps have been born alone, but certainly he could not grow up alone; it is necessary for you also to have Anteros, if you wish that Eros may grow. And these two brothers will be of the same nature: they will each cause the growth of the other. And looking at each other they will also blossom, but they will diminish, if one (or the other) is left alone.’

8. For example, Ovid. *Met.* 3.386–7:

‘*Huc coeamus!*’ ait, nullique libentius umquam responsura sono ‘coeamus!’ rettulit Echo, ...

(‘Here let us meet,’ he cries. Echo, never to answer another sound more gladly, cries: ‘Let us meet’ ...). There is a *double-entendre* in the verbe *coire*, meaning ‘to meet, come together’ and also ‘to copulate’. On these playful echo effects in Ovid see G. Rosati, *Narciso e Pigmalione* (Florence, 1984) 29–30; a shorter version of Ch. I, ‘Narciso o l’illusione letteraria’ appeared as ‘Narciso o l’illusione dissolta’ in *Maia*, 28 (1976) 83–108.

9. I shall limit myself to citing the study by L. Brisson, ‘Bisexualité et médiation en Grèce ancienne’, *Nouv. rev. psychoanal.*, 7(1973) 27–48. The entire volume, on the theme *Bisexualité et différence des sexes*, is of great interest for the study of these problems.

10. A general bibliography on Narcissus would be inappropriately long; many references may be found in the notes in Rosati, *Narcissus*, and P. Hadot, ‘Le mythe de Narcisse et son interprétation par Plotin’, *Nouv. rev. psychoanal.*, 13 (1976) 81–108. The entire volume is dedicated to the Narcissus theme and its mythical, literary, artistic and psychological aspects. See however the notable study by Louise Vinge, *The Narcissus Theme in Western Literature up to the Early 19th Century* (Lund, 1967).

I wish to offer grateful acknowledgements to Bruno Gentili, Claude Calame and Catherine and Jacques Geninasca, who patiently read an early draft of these reflections and who offered to me, as always, helpful suggestions and wise counsels.

Greek Myth and Ritual: The Case of Kronos

H. S. Versnel

‘Myth, in my terminology, is the counterpart of ritual: myth implies ritual, ritual implies myth, they are one and the same’; thus E. Leach takes his stand in a discussion that can have no end.¹ At the beginning of that discussion stands myth, identified as ‘mistaken explanation’ of ritual, to use Frazer’s famous phrase. An inverse relationship has been postulated by the myth-and-ritual school of Hooke and his followers: myth as the scenario for ritual. A third possible explanation for the link between the two was offered by Jane Harrison: ‘They probably arose together. Ritual is the utterance of an emotion, a thing felt in *action*, myth in words or thoughts. They arise *pari passu*.’ One recognises expressions of this view in several more recent anthropological studies. On the other hand, in his fundamental critical work, G. S. Kirk argues that any monolithic theory regarding myth and ritual should be rejected: all three forms of interrelation do indeed occur, but it must be remembered as well that there are many more rites without myths and myths without rites than there are related rites and myths.

Kirk does have a point, of course, but that does not mean the end of the myth and ritual investigation. If ‘myth and ritual do not correspond in details of content but in structure and atmosphere’,² it is worthwhile investigating whether there are indeed any examples at all of a myth and rite operating *pari passu* as ‘symbolic processes for dealing with the same type of situation in the same affective mode’ (C1. Kluckhohn). W. Burkert has done so in recent years with regard to Greece, in his analysis of myth and ritual complexes, specifically the Arrhephoria festival and the myth of the Lemnian women. Although even Kirk has been convinced by Burkert’s arguments that in these complexes myths and rites indeed are more or less parallel representations of a certain affective atmosphere surrounding the turn of the year, it cannot be denied that in both complexes strong aetiological components are present, too; if the myth does not explain details of the ritual, it does, at any rate, translate them into words and images.

It is my belief that there was in Greece a myth and ritual complex – also

related to the transition from the old year to the new – in which myth and rite have indeed been formed *pari passu*, possibly even more clearly than in the cases just mentioned, and have developed as parallel expressions – interrelating ones, true enough, but interrelating in such a subtle and at the same time complicated manner that here at least the rite cannot be taken as example for the myth, nor the myth as scenario for the rite. I am referring to the myth and ritual complex of Kronos and the Kronia.³

1. Kronos: the Myth

The oldest version of the myth of Kronos is also the most complete. Apart from minor additions and variations – in themselves often quite significant – the myth as Hesiod tells it in the *Theogony* has not changed essentially in the course of time.⁴ A short summary:

Like Iapetus, Themis, Rhea and so on, Kronos belongs to the race of the Titans, children of Uranos and Ge, the first generation of gods. Kronos hated his father, who had banished his children to the depths of the earth. At their mother's lamentations, only Kronos among the Titans was prepared to take action against his father, and with his sickle he cut ('mowed') (181) off Uranos' genitalia. From the resulting drops of blood sprang the Erinyes, the giants and the nymphs. Out of the froth (= the semen) of the genitalia, which had fallen into the sea, Aphrodite was born. Next, Kronos and his sister/spouse, Rhea produced children, including the first generation of Olympians, the family of gods currently in power: Hestia, Demeter, Hera, Poseidon, Hades, and lastly Zeus. Kronos, fearing that one of them would overthrow him (462) 'gulped down' all his children immediately after their births (*katepine*: 459, 467, 473, 497). Rhea, however, brought her last child, Zeus, into the world on Crete, where he grew up hidden in a cave without his father's knowledge. Instead of the baby, Rhea had fed Kronos a stone wrapped in swaddling clothes. Once he had grown up, Zeus forced Kronos to regurgitate the other children; first came the stone, which has been displayed in Delphi ever since (cf. Sourvinou-Inwood, this volume, [Ch. 10](#), Appendix). After this liberation he freed Kronos' brothers, the Cyclopes, who had been chained in the Underworld by their father, Uranos (501); in return for their rescue, the Cyclopes gave Zeus his thunderbolt. The hundred-handed giants also were freed (652, 659) from their subterranean prison at the edge of the world (621/2), where they had been held in heavy irons (618), in order to assist Zeus and the other Olympians in their battle against the Titans. An interpolated passage (*Th.* 687–712) does, indeed, say that Zeus destroyed the Titans with his thunderbolt, but the authentic text ascribes the victory to the hundred-handed giants, who drove the Titans deep under the earth and bound them in strong chains (718). It is true that this part does not say explicitly that Kronos suffered the same fate, but a later passage, in which the monster Typhoeus (who according to the scholiast on *Il.* 2.783 is a

son of Kronos) waylays Zeus, includes an interpolated line (851): 'The Titans, in Tartarus, keeping Kronos company.'

In *Works and Days* 168, it is mentioned that Zeus settled the heroes after their deaths along the edges of the earth, where they lead carefree and happy lives on the Islands of the Blessed, where the spelt-giving soil yields a rich harvest three times a year. An interpolated verse (169) then continues: 'far from the immortals. Among them Kronos is king', and in a subsequent interpolated passage it is stated: 'his bonds the father of men and gods had broken'. Although not Hesiodic, this version must have been known as early as the archaic era.⁵ Pindar is familiar with it (*Ol.* 2.70 v.).

Since the publication of the Hurrian-Hittite Kumarbi myth in 1945⁶ scholars have agreed all but unanimously that Hesiod indirectly must have derived important parts of the Kronos myth from this much older tale. For here Kumarbi castrates his father Anu by biting off his genitalia and becomes pregnant by them with three (or five) children, among whom is the god of the storms, comparable to Zeus. Kumarbi regurgitates all the children except the god of the storms, who emerges by a more or less 'natural' route and dethrones his father. His father makes a final attempt at resistance with the assistance of a monster born from his semen (Ullikummi), but to no avail.

The striking resemblance between the two tales has led even to the hypothesis, notably argued by W. Burkert,⁷ that the derivation of the *Theogony* myth from an oriental tradition could not have taken place until the eighth or seventh century, as this was the period in which 'orientalisation' had a much greater impact on the Greek world than scholars previously have been inclined to believe. Parts of the motif are found as early as the *Iliad*: Kronos is the father of Zeus, Hades and Poseidon (15.187) and of Hera (5.721; cf. 4.59). He resides at 'the limits of the earth and of the sea', where Iapetus is, too. This place is identified with the depths of Tartarus, which 'lies around it' (8.477–80) a subterranean abode to which Zeus has expelled his father and where he remains among the 'subterranean gods' (14.274; cf. 15.225).

Later versions add new elements. In Apollodorus l.lff, the Kouretes have a secure position as Zeus' protectors. It is by means of an emetic that Kronos is made to vomit; furthermore, he also has fathered the hybrid Cheiron (1.2.4). Apollodorus does not enlarge on Kronos' whereabouts after his defeat, although it is this aspect in particular that traditionally was enriched elsewhere with stereotyped features, and which right down to Roman times gave rise to variation and amplification. This tendency also began with Hesiod.

So far the picture has been largely negative, a picture that already in antiquity met with resistance: parricide, infanticide – even cannibalism⁸ – rebellion in a ruthless struggle for power, a complete absence of moral standards, and lawlessness: all these elements were spotted and – sometimes – condemned.⁹ Kronos' stock epithet *ankulometes* – possibly meaning 'with the curved sickle' originally¹⁰ – was generally interpreted as 'with crooked tricks' or 'devious', a negative description; his actions were part of the unbridled

excesses of a distant past, his punishment seemed just, his time was over. Apparently the oriental myth was associated with a god, possibly of pre-Greek signature, who no longer functioned as an active and intervening god.

Yet all this is only one side of the matter. There is another, which is the diametrical opposite of this negative picture. Kronos is king, or to express it more strongly 'Kronos is *the* king'.¹¹ The title *basileus* (king) is stereotypical from Hesiod until late antiquity. Strikingly, Julian, *Conviv.* 317 D, still makes a distinction between Kronos and Zeus: 'O, King Kronos and Father Zeus'. Kronos is even presented as the one who introduced the principle of kingship. Hesiod (*Th.* 486) calls him 'the first king' and as late as Byzantine times an author says: 'Kronos introduced kingship.' That nothing negative is implied by the term *basileus* is apparent from another epithet: *megas* (great), with which he is qualified in the *Iliad*, as well as by Hesiod.¹² On the contrary, Kronos' kingdom, which usually is visualised as existing on earth, was a realm of peace, justice and prosperity. Pindar so strongly associated such benefits with human kingship that he calls the abode whither the pious travel after death, a king's 'tower' (*Ol.* 2.125vv).¹³ Such references bring us to the topic of the famous *Saturnia regna* or 'life at the time of Kronos', as the Athenians called the happy period under Pisistratos (Aristotle *Athenaion Politeia* 17.5), the Golden Age at the beginning of time, now irrevocably in the past. This image, too, is familiar even to Hesiod. In his description of the races of men, which perhaps also was derived from oriental myth and seems to have been a tradition unknown to Homer, he says everything began with the Golden Race (*Works and Days* 109–26): people lived like gods, without worry, exertion or suffering. They were not bothered by old age: their limbs were eternally young and they revelled happily (115). Death came like sleep. The earth yielded fruit of its own accord, abundantly and plentifully, and people lived contentedly in the midst of peace and profusion. After their disappearance from the face of the earth they became good *daimones*, guardians of mortals and bestowers of wealth (126). This marks the beginning of a rich tradition of utopianism and 'wishing-time'¹⁴ with which Kronos is closely associated; this, too, since Hesiod, for according to him the people of the Golden Race lived when Kronos was king in Heaven (*Works and Days* 111). The tradition of making this utopian time Kronos' era can be followed from the *Alkmaeonis*, via Empedocles and the *Inachos* of Sophocles (alone among tragedies); the theme widens in Old Comedy, as is shown especially in Athenaeus 6.267E ff. In Old Comedy the motif of abundance, of a 'land of Cockaigne' receives particular attention; there are descriptions of primeval eras, of Pluto's underworld, and of the far-away land of the Persians, who generally were notorious for their excess and luxury.¹⁵

In connection with this motif and partly as a reaction to it as well, there arose in the fourth century a remarkable alternative, possibly under the influence of Antisthenes. According to Plato, Kronos' realm is not one of superabundance. On the contrary, it is a realm of simplicity, indeed, of the

simplicity of animals. Here bliss is defined ethically and justice is the code-word; this theme blossomed in Latin literature, particularly under the influence of Cynics and the like, as rejection and condemnation of the decadent luxury of real life.¹⁶ This rejection led to the development of a peculiar ambiguity in the appreciation of, and accordingly in the ‘setting’ of the ‘natural, wild existence’. When the natural, wild existence was portrayed as unbridled and inhuman, it was placed before the realm of Kronos/Saturnus, which brought moral standards, justice and civilisation. Alternatively the era of Kronos/Saturnus itself was the wild life, but then ‘wild’ had the sense of the simple, natural, but not bestial – a life without the complexities of civilisation.

As the geographic horizon expanded, Kronos moved ever further to the West,¹⁷ where he was identified with similar deities, such as Saturnus. Eventually we find him on a utopian island west of Britannia, where he is represented as either asleep or in chains. On the other hand he was also placed to the East in Phrygia, asleep again.¹⁸ In structural terms, a god sleeping and a god wearing chains are identical:¹⁹ both gods are ‘out of action’.

This highly selective survey offers a remarkably ambiguous, even contradictory, picture. Kronos is, on one hand, the god of an inhumanly cruel era without ethical standards; on the other he is the king of a Golden Age of abundance, happiness and justice. He is the loser who has been exiled, chained and enslaved, but also the great king *par excellence*, who has been liberated and rules supreme. His realm is thought to have existed either before historical times, or after time, i.e. in death. It was sometimes situated on the earth, sometimes deep down in the earth, sometimes at the edge of the world. It is possible to construct the following table of oppositions:

Negative

Kronos as a person:

child-murderer

cannibal

tyrant

Misled education

lack of fully abstract standards

land of Cockaigne

struggle for power, rebellion

ideologically: natural order and justice

peace

simplicity

Misplaced estimation:

enslaved king of blessed people

asleep: powerless

In addition the following oppositions beyond the categories of positive and negative can be set forth:

~~Black and white~~ of Utopia in this world':
irrevocably past
~~Black and white~~ of Utopia (for chosen people)
or in far away outer regions (e.g. the West)
within reach, in a special sense

Such a violent opposition within one and the same divine ambiance calls for an explanation. Explanations have been proposed, of course. They generally boil down to a denial of the seriousness of the contradictions. The difficulty of accepting such explanations, however, becomes clear from a review of the cult and the rites surrounding the god, in which exactly the same ambiguity exists.

2. Kronos: the Rite

'Kronos scheint im Kult keinen festen Platz zu haben, er ist ein Schatten': thus Nilsson, unconsciously varying a statement by von Wilamowitz: 'Er ist eben ein Gott ausser Diensten, abgetan wie die rohe Urzeit.'²⁰

The evidence fully bears out the correctness of these statements. A really old cult is attested only in Olympia, where Kronos' priests are called *hoi basilai* – a possible, but not certain, correlate of Kronos' kingship (*basileus*). We know of only one temple in Athens built by Pisistratos for Kronos and Rhea. The only known temple statue is the one of Lebadeia, belonging to the Trophonios sanctuary. In Athens, on the 15th of Elaphebolion (± April), Kronos was given a cake having twelve little globules on it. These few facts outline the cultic tableau:²¹ a few further pieces of ritual data will be given below. Realising, on the other hand, that 'Kronion', as a month name as well as a city name²² – the latter especially in Sicily – is quite common, one cannot but come to the conclusion that, in earlier times, Kronos must indeed have had a cultic significance that he later lost, perhaps after being ousted by a newly introduced generation of gods. The result is, to quote Nilsson (*ibid.*) once again: 'Er ist mythologisch, nicht kultisch.' This is, as I hope to show, a correct conclusion, having, however, implications reaching much further than was suspected by Nilsson, who was interested primarily in gods tangible in cult. The following short description of a number of rituals associated with Kronos does not contradict this conclusion, but rather, as will become clear, confirms it.

Kronia were celebrated on Rhodes on the sixth of Metageitnion (text: Pedageitnion). Porphyry (*On Abstinence* 2.54) tells of humans being sacrificed to Kronos during that festival.²³ Later, a condemned criminal was kept alive until the *Kronia*, and then taken outside the gates to Aristobule's statue, given wine to drink and slaughtered. From the date it has been concluded that this typical example of a scapegoat ritual springs from the Artemis cult and became

associated with Kronos only later. This may quite well be true, although it is dangerous to build a case on a chance temporal coincidence. Important, however, is the fact that elsewhere as well, Kronos is associated specifically with bloody and cruel human sacrifices; the ancient attitude is summarised by Sophocles (*Andr.* fr. 126 Radt) as follows: 'Of old there is a custom among barbarians to sacrifice humans to Kronos.' Clearly this is about barbarians, as are other testimonia. Best known are the Phoenician-Punic human sacrifices, which are supposed to have been introduced by a former king, El/Kronos.²⁴ The Carthaginian god in whose huge bronze statue children were burnt to death also was identified with Kronos/Saturnus.²⁵ It was said that in Italy and Sardinia, too, humans had been sacrificed to Saturnus²⁶ – probably just as legendary a fact as Istros' (*FGrH* 334 F 48) remark about Crete that the Kouretes in ancient times sacrificed children to Kronos, or the later reports by Christian authors about human sacrifices in Greece itself.

Surveying all these data, one is not surprised that in places Kronos stands as a *signum* for human sacrifice, bloody offering and even cannibalism. Side by side with the above-mentioned text by Sophocles stands, for instance, Euhemerus' view (Ennius *Euhemerus* 9.5) that Kronos and Rhea and the other people living then used to eat human flesh.

A more negative and gruesome picture hardly can be imagined. Therefore, the appearance of another, again utterly contrasting one is all the more striking. According to Empedocles, and in Pythagorean circles generally, Kronos is the very symbol of unbloody sacrifice.²⁷ The Athenian cake sacrifice is a good illustration of this,²⁸ and Athenaeus 3,110B informs us that by way of offering the Alexandrians used to put loaves of bread in Kronos' temple, from which everybody was allowed to eat. This peaceful and joyous aspect crops up in an almost hyperbolic form in the Attic celebration of the Kronia.²⁹ Apart from a short mention by Demosthenes 24.26, with mention of the date (12 Hekatombaion = ± August), we have two somewhat more detailed reports.

Plutarch *Moralia* 1098B: 'So too, when slaves hold the Kronia feast or go about celebrating the country Dionysia, you could not endure the jubilation and din.'

Macrobius *Saturnalia* 1.10.22:

Philochorus [*FGrH* 328 F 97] says that Cecrops was the first to build, in Attica, an altar to Saturn and Ops, worshiping these deities as Jupiter and Earth, and to ordain that, when crops and fruits had been garnered, heads of households everywhere should eat thereof in company with the slaves with whom they had borne the toil of cultivating the land, for it was well pleasing to the god that honour should be paid to the slaves in consideration of their labour. And that is why we follow the practice of a foreign land and offer sacrifice to Saturn with the head uncovered. (tr. P. V. Davies).

The former text merely says that slaves/servants had a festival with a banquet,

during which they enjoyed themselves mightily, and which – in Plutarch's time at least – was celebrated in Attica at any rate.³⁰ The latter testimonium is more explicit.

Finally, the Roman poet Accius (*Ann.* fr. 3 M, Bae.; *Fr. poet. lat.* Morel p. 34) adds that most Greeks, but the Athenians in particular, celebrated this festival: 'in all fields and towns they feast upon banquets elatedly and everyone waits upon his own servants. From this had been adopted as well our own custom of servants and masters eating together in one and the same place.'

Some scholars have contended that Accius projected the attested Roman custom of masters waiting upon their slaves at the Saturnalia, to the Greek Kronia, about which we know only that masters and slaves dined together. However, there is no ground for such scepticism. First, our other sources are much too scanty. Secondly, when masters regale their servants, this implies naturally some sort of reversal of normal functions, whether this is ritually demonstrated or not. A number of closely related 'Saturnalian' festivals in Greece show that freedom of slaves could indeed take various forms. In Troizen, for instance, the slaves were for one day allowed to play knuckle-bones with the citizens, and the masters treated the servants to a meal, possibly during a Poseidon festival. During the Thessalian festival of the Peloria, dedicated to Zeus Peloros, strangers were offered a banquet, prisoners freed of their fetters; slaves lay down at dinner and were waited upon by their masters, with full freedom of speech. At Hermes festivals on Crete, too, the slaves stuffed themselves and the masters served. Ephoros (*FGrH* 70 F 29) even knows of a festival in Kydonia on Crete where the serfs, the Klarotes, could lord it in the city while the citizens stayed outside. The slaves were also allowed to whip the citizens, probably those who had recklessly remained in the city or re-entered it. In connection with this, Bömer³¹ has drawn attention to a formerly neglected datum, to wit, that on a specific day of the Spartan Hyakinthia 'the citizens treated all their acquaintances and their own slaves to a meal'. The Hermes Charidotes festival on Samos, during which stealing and robbing were permitted, presents a slightly different situation, because the specific master-slave relationship was not involved. More examples could be given, but these suffice.

Before summarising our findings about the ritual, there must be one more word about iconography.³² Except on coins, representations of Kronos with uncovered head are very rare for the older period. The usual type of statue is of a seated Zeus-like god, his head leaning on a hand. The back of the head is almost always covered by a fold of the robe. This type occurs as early as the fifth century BC, and is found quite frequently until late in the Roman period. Even the ancients could only guess at the meaning of this headgear, which was unusual in Greece: 'Some claim his head is covered because the beginning of time is unknown' – such is the guess of the Vatican Mythographer III. 1.5, alluding to the identification of Kronos/Chronos. Modern scholars have considered grief as a possible reason – sadness at his downfall and oppression

– or the secrecy of his plans. No unanimous conclusion has been reached, however. We are told several times that the feet of the Roman statue of Saturnus were shackled (or wrapped in woollen bandages) and that on his holiday the statue was freed of its chains.³³ Apollodorus of Athens (*FGrH* 224 F 118) states that this was also a Greek custom with regard to the Kronos statue, although Macrobius, who quotes him, incorrectly dates this festival in December. Some modern scholars, including Jacoby,³⁴ interpret this statement as referring to Roman customs that this author of the second century BC supposedly knew of. In my opinion it is at least equally probable that he was familiar with such a custom from his own Greek surroundings, perhaps in particular from Alexandria, where he lived and from where our knowledge of other new elements comes as well. A Kronos/Saturnus in chains is, for that matter, a topos in the later magical papyri.³⁵

This survey of cultic and ritual aspects has brought us to the conclusion that Kronos is just as ambiguous a figure in ritual as in myth. For ritual, too, we can draw up a diagram of opposing positive and negative elements.

Negative

~~Typical of scarcity: filices, cakes, loaves of bread~~

~~Amplification of Kronos's hostile, limited freedom and abundance: extreme relaxation~~

~~Iconography: (K)ronos shackled all year long~~

(the last possibly, but not conclusively, Greek)

3. Kronos: the Contradiction

It has become clear that oppositions within the myth of Kronos have close correspondences in ritual. On one hand, there is a complex of failing standards and lawlessness, patricide and infanticide, cannibalism, rebellion and enslavement: *Kronos ankulometes*. On the other hand, there is the complex of peace and natural well-being, material abundance and ethical justice, the breaking of chains: *Kronos megas*.

Either of the two complexes is in itself quite familiar: the negative one shows the characteristics typical of chaos, which, as we will see, in many cultures has been visualised as a primordial era before the introduction of human culture, but which in certain situations can return to the real world for a short while.³⁶ The positive complex presents the usual image of Utopia where – not always, but often – a natural abundance eliminates social tensions and suppressions, sometimes eliminates even the existing hierarchy. The bewildering thing about Kronos is that, in his surroundings, these extreme oppositions are united in one greater unit – without, however, being reconciled. This has naturally not escaped scholars' attention. 'Diese Vorstellungen sind unvereinbar,' von Wilamowitz wrote in 1929; 'Ce Cronos,

père de Zeus ... est un personnage divin fort ambigu,' Vidal-Naquet wrote fifty years later.³⁷

That the ancients also observed the contradictions – consciously or unconsciously – is apparent from a great number of details. The stock epithet *ankulometes* is usually interpreted as meaning 'plotting crooked, devious things', but side by side with this it is also explained as 'sensibly deliberating on crooked matters'.³⁸ The opposition between bloody and bloodless sacrifices also leads to contradictions: Athenaeus' report of the Alexandrians' sacrificing loaves of bread to Kronos violently clashes with Macrobius' information (*Sat.* 1.7.14 vv) that it was the Alexandrians in particular who made bloody sacrifices to their Kronos (and Serapis), in a typically Greek manner. Comparable to this is the fact that in the Athenian inscription mentioned above the unbloody sacrifice of a round cake to Kronos is immediately followed by a sacrifice of a piece of pastry in the shape of an ox (unbloody, but referring to bloody matters).³⁹ Cheiron's status ever since Pherecydes⁴⁰ as the son of Kronos, is in my opinion, based on this ambiguity: Cheiron, too, is a creature midway between human and animal, having elements of the wild, bestial and uncontrolled (especially when connected with the centaurs as a group) and also having elements of culture and justice: Cheiron teaches the art of healing and other arts, and already in Homer is called 'the most righteous of the centaurs' (*Il.* 11.832).

In antiquity, too, people noticed the paradox and sometimes tried to get rid of it, for instance by condemning and ignoring Kronos' negative aspects. Modern scholars dislike contradictions even more, perhaps. One of the commonest modern mechanisms for explaining contradictions is to call them anomalies that developed accidentally, either under the influence of foreign cultures or as a result of the gradual clustering within Greece of initially quite unrelated traditions. Furthermore, an internal evolution and deformation is also possible. Pohlenz, for instance, searches for a solution to his problem: 'das goldene Zeitalter ... passt schlecht genug zu dem Frevler Kronos', in a merging of different traditions: the mythical one involving an evil Kronos supposedly was combined later with the merry agricultural festival that was assumedly specifically Attic. Marôt – '*Kronos ankulometes* auch sonst scharf von *Kronos megas* zu trennen' – even perceives two completely independent original Kronos figures, namely, a cosmogonic and a vegetative dying and rising god.⁴¹ The discovery of the Kumarbi poem, of course, provided the 'oriental excuse': this horrid tale allegedly had nothing to do with the original Kronos and simply was ascribed to him later on. Many more such 'solutions' have been proposed. Gods, myths and rites are – and on this issue I would not leave any doubt – products of age-long traditions showing development, deformations, assimilations and amalgamations. The multi-faceted Apollo is one example;⁴² an opposition within one name, Zeus Olympios and Zeus Meilichios, another. Nevertheless, the analysis of such historical processes offers a solution of very restricted relevance only. For assimilation and identification do not occur

arbitrarily; there must have been affinities or similarities encouraging the process: why was Kronos the one to be identified with Kumarbi? Undoubtedly not merely because he was a fading god, who suffered no damage from this nasty imputation. In other words, the question should not concern primarily the *how*, but the *why*. More relevant is, however, the following: even if a diversity in the origins of various elements can be shown, the most important problem remains: the explanation of the fact that the Greeks since Hesiod – in whose works the opposition, as we have seen, is already fully present – not only tolerated the clashing components of the Kronos figure for centuries, but apparently deliberately enlarged them: we find specifications about Kronos as god of the human sacrifice in the same period in which Kronos was given additional significance as the god of Cockaigne in comedy and as gentle king of a realm of peace in philosophy. Any explanation is in this case only entitled to that name if it accepts the *coincidentia oppositorum* as a structural datum and makes it the core of the problem.

Matters are complicated by the fact that there is no unanimity about the development of the isolated complexes either. Golden Age and Attic Kronia evidently belong together as far as atmosphere is concerned. But how did they come together? The explanations of the older studies, practically without exception, presuppose a development. The myth came first, then the ritual, says von Wilamowitz: ‘Die Menschen wollen für einen Tag das selige Leben führen, wie es im goldenen Zeitalter unter Kronos gewesen war.’ No, the ritualists riposte, ‘antike Feste entstehen nicht auf diese Weise’ (Deubner, as well as Nilsson, Ziehen, Jacoby, Bömer and others), and Ed. Meyer explains that the image of the Golden Age arose precisely from this type of festival.⁴³ The festival itself, it was unanimously decided, belongs to a widespread genre that entitles oppressed people, servants or slaves, to one single day of relaxation, for reasons of humanity for instance.⁴⁴ At any rate it is certainly not connected only with the harvest, and therefore it could be associated with various gods.

The very same ‘which was first’ question applies to the negative aspects of the myth and ritual. According to Gruppe, the myth of the child-devourer was fabricated after the example of the ritual child and human sacrifices; Pohlenz, on the other hand, sees things exactly the other way round: because the myth was familiar, Kronos came to be associated with all kinds of human sacrifices.⁴⁵ Indeed the only Greek human sacrifice, viz. the one on Rhodes, originally belonged to Artemis.

All these views involve a fundamental assumption of the inter-relatedness of myth and rite, but none of them even approaches a meaningful interpretation of the Kronos complex as a whole. The only theory from this period (the early twentieth century) that does aspire emphatically after that goal has one drawback: it is untenable. Frazer⁴⁶ has integrated the whole of the Kronos myth and ritual complex in his comprehensive theory of the dying and rising god/king of the year: Kronos is a vegetative dying and rising god.

His festival therefore must be considered a celebration surrounding the turn of the year; the human sacrifices are explained as a substitute for regicide. Under this theory the dark and the bright aspects are integrated in one comprehensive picture. Frazer is, however, a fallen colossus and although elements of his general theory have certainly remained of value, Andrew Lang's attack⁴⁷ on the Kronos theory in particular is irrefutably final. The Kronia are not evidently harvest festivals in all cases, Kronos' sickle does not necessarily make him a vegetation god, merry slaves' feasts are not connected only with Kronos, etc., etc. The golden bough is broken, and yet Frazer was the first to take the contradiction seriously and to try to integrate it in a holistic explanation. Without Frazer, the following passage by Karl Meuli,⁴⁸ who actually uses a different model of interpretation, would not have been conceivable: 'Bei den gefesselten Göttern zeigt sich der Zusammenhang von Leben und Tod, von Glück und Grauen; sie sind böse und gefährlich, darum bindet man sie mit Ketten fest; und sie sind wenn ihnen die Fesseln gelöst sind, gnädig und gütig und schenken den Menschen das Glück.' Here too is a serious approach to the contradiction, but it departs from another point: the festival of unchained gods and men. For 'Immer gilt für die Menschen, was für ihre Götter gilt; beim Fest sind auch sie gelöst und vom Zwang des Alltags befreit.' Whereas the myth and ritual complex of the dying and rising vegetation was Frazer's frame of reference, Meuli concentrates on the link with death. We will not follow him in this view any more than we followed Frazer. Death symbolism does play a part, but is not the centre of interpretation. The complex of chaining and being unchained, rather, will be the starting point for our interpretation of the *coincidentia oppositorum*, and, behind it, of the connection between Kronos' myth and ritual.

4. The Festival of Reversal

The Kronia belong to the 'Saturnalia-like' festivals, as has often been stated. As in the case of carnival or one of its medieval equivalents, 'la fête des fous', social and hierarchical roles are reversed: the fool is king and rules at will. Under his rule, humans turn into animals, women play men's roles; children command their teachers, slaves their masters. We find freedom for women at other Greek festivals; at the Kronia and related festivals it is the slaves who are free. They sometimes are literally unfettered, then treated to a banquet, often even waited upon by their masters. There is freedom of speech, in Rome even the freedom of putting the masters on trial; also in Rome, slaves take the whip to freemen, or, something more peaceful but no less unusual, play knucklebones with them. Drinking wine is sometimes explicitly permitted; this is quite contrary to conventions, for slaves do not drink wine, or at best drink it only in scanty measure.

Two aspects are combined here: on one hand the reversal of roles, on the

other the elation caused by the collective abundance of food and drink, summarised by Macrobius *Saturnalia* 1.7.26: *tota servis licentia permittitur*. In modern literature, this kind of festival is known under different names: 'periods of licence' (Frazer), 'rituals of rebellion' (Gluckman), 'rituals of conflict' (Norbeck), 'legitimate rebellion' (Weidkuhn), side by side with German terms such as 'legale Anarchien', 'Ventilsitten' or 'Ausnahmezeiten'.⁴⁹ The emphasis on the legitimate deviance is linked to the type of functionalistic explanation attached to it. For a short time, oppressed social groups are given an opportunity to release pentup aggression in a game of reversed roles; thus the possible dangers of a real revolution are neutralised. This is in fact the 'no-nonsense' interpretation of Nilsson and Bömer, and this function of the festival has sometimes been recognised as such by the participants themselves; for instance an ex-slave typified it in 1855 as a 'safety-valve to carry off the explosive elements'.⁵⁰ Nowadays more emphasis is laid on the demonstrative and symbolic aspects: via ritual, the conflict is made clear in an enlarged but symbolic form, and the real conflict is encapsulated. 'The supreme ruse of power is to allow itself to be contested ritually in order to consolidate itself more effectively' (G. Balandier).⁵¹

This explanation, useful though it may be, does not cover the total range of the phenomena. At least equal attention should be paid to the legitimising effect. The established order is confirmed by the absurdity of the world turned topsy-turvy. A precursor in this view was Gluckman,⁵² according to whom these rites 'give expression, in a reversed form, to the normal rightness of a particular kind of social order'. Their main function is to attain 'cohesion in the wider society'. Of course, both functions can reinforce each other, but they are still distinguishable: neutralising potential aggression is not identical to legitimating the social *status quo* by means of the absurd. Or as B. Sutton Smith⁵³ says about 'playing': 'We may be disorderly in games either because we have an overdose of order *or* because we have something to learn through being disorderly.'

In point of fact, both aspects often exist side by side in different forms: the dissociative one acted out in the conflict of role reversal, the integrating and legitimising one present not only in the role-playing but also demonstratively so in the *collective* and *egalitarian* experience of the festival as image of abundance. Whereas earlier interpreters of the carnival laid special emphasis on the 'safety-valve effect', recent scholars pay attention to the solidarising and legitimising functions too.⁵⁴ Reversal rituals may function in very different contexts⁵⁵ and are by no means restricted to agricultural rituals (Frazer) or death symbolism (Meuli). The religious anchorage is quite variable too, i.e. there is not necessarily a connection with any one specific reversal god. Indeed, gods need not be involved at all.

The theories mentioned above deal with categories of social and socio-psychological processes, a level at which legitimation and solidarising take place via general consensus about the rightness of the established order. This is

the field in which generations of sociologists since Durkheim have operated, and the field in which, in their opinion, religion was a function too. Many of them, however, including convinced functionalists, have withdrawn from this extreme point of view: 'the functional explanation of religion does not explain religion, rather it explains a dimension of society' – thus M. E. Spiro, and P. Berger,⁵⁶ too, has once more brought our attention to 'substantive versus functional definitions of religion.' 'All societies are constructions in the face of chaos. The constant possibility of anomic terror is actualized whenever legitimations obscuring the precariousness are threatened or collapse,' Berger and Luckman⁵⁷ write, and in such situations, or more regularly in ceremonially created periods of crisis – literally: separation between two eras, situations, periods – a 'deep legitimacy' is required, referring to a mythical reality outside ours, 'the other reality', lying outside history and space, an eternal truth that existed before time but still exists behind it and behind our reality, and occasionally mingles with ours in 'periods of exception'.⁵⁸

Seen from this perspective, the reversal ritual offers another, deeper meaning. Although not linked to any particular type of festival or sector of social life, as I have said, reversal rituals are found predominately in the ceremonies accompanying a critical passage in the agricultural or social year, moments of stagnation and rupture at which chaos threatens, e.g. initiation, festivals of the dead, and in particular the eating or offering of the first fruits of the harvest or the first wine as a recurrent, or the accession of a new ruler as an incidental, incision in the progress of time. One or more such events may develop into one or more regular New Year celebrations,⁵⁹ in which various elements are united into a fixed pattern. Eliade and Lanternari⁶⁰ in particular have given a complete description of this 'grande festa'. It is essential that the caesura between old and new is experienced as a disruption of social life, a vacuum that is filled by a temporary return of the mythical primordial era from before Creation or before the birth of the present culture.⁶¹ This invariably happens in images of chaos, dissociation, dissolution of order, a topsy-turvy world, e.g. a temporary abolition of kingship and laws. There are orgies in the sense of drinking bouts as well as in the sexual sense, ritual fights between two groups, return and welcome of the dead. *Rites de séparation* may precede (purification, expulsion of the *pharmakos* (scapegoat), bloody sacrifices, extinguishing of fire), *rites d'aggrégation* follow: the wearing of new clothing, lighting of fire, renewal of kingship, the 'fixing of the fate' for the coming year. The chaos that is acted out ritually is often anchored mythically in primeval chaos, for instance in the image of the struggle between creator-god and chaos-monster, or of deluge and consequent re-creation. This primal chaos manifests itself as a temporary elimination of all contours, a return to a state undefined by bounds and moral standards, expressing itself in the creation of monsters and monstrosities; a period of total freedom (= total lawlessness as well as total abundance).⁶² This lends to the festival an atmosphere of utter ambivalence: sadness, anxiety, despair because of the

catastrophe of the disrupted order; elation, joy and hope because of the liberation from chafing bonds, and the pleasant experience of temporary abundance. Thus the reversed world of society in crisis is an image of the cosmic chaos of mythical times. Both modern approaches to the reversal festival, the functionalist one and the cosmic-religious one, will contribute to an interpretation of the contradictions of the Kronos myth and ritual complex.

5. The *licentia* of the Kronia and Related Festivals

5.1 *The Paradox of the Impossible Harmony*

Like the period of licence in anthropology, the Kronia (and similar festivals) have two aspects. The first one is the ‘orgiastic’ aspect of the shared experience of merry-making and abundance in an atmosphere of dissolution of hierarchy, which includes a component of strong cohesion and solidarity.⁶³ Not only the slave, but everyone experiences the liberation as temporary relaxation based on equality. Here, therefore, *harmony* prevails. This harmony, however, was experienced as unpleasantly ambiguous as we learn from two closely related literary representations of ‘Der Traum von der grossen Harmonie’:⁶⁴ comedy and Utopia.

Just like the Saturnalian festival, comedy is pre-eminently a solidarising medium.⁶⁵ Collective laughter is cohesive and marks the boundaries of the cognitive and affective territory of a group.⁶⁶ In Old Comedy, the representation of the land of Cockaigne, generally as image of the golden primeval era, occasionally as a vision of the future, is a standard theme. In this imagery, the earth bears fruit of its own accord and the food offers itself ready cooked.⁶⁷ Quite frequently this *automaton* implies the superfluity of labour and consequently of slaves, in Aristophanes’ *Birds* 760–5 in passing, in Krates’ *Wild animals* (PCG IV F 16 Kassel/Austin) as the central theme of a discussion. This image also is found in philosophers such as Empedocles (B128 Diels/Kranz) and Plato, *Republic* 271 D–272 B.⁶⁸ In complete freedom there was complete equality and complete abundance. In King Kronos’ time ‘people even gambled with loaves of bread’ (Kratinos PCG IV F 176 Kassel/Austin), and Telekleides *Amphictyones* fr. 1 Kock, describes a country where there were indeed slaves, who, however, did not work (!) but ‘played at dice with pigs’ vulvae and other delicacies’. That is utter freedom, but it is actually too good to be true. Frequently, therefore, a few uncomfortable afterthoughts are found in the same context.

Pherecydes fr. 10 Kock describes a slaveless society, but also makes it perfectly clear that in consequence the women have to work their fingers to the bone in order to get the work done, and the fields are neglected so that people starve (idem fr. 13). In Herodotos 6.137,⁶⁹ Hekataeus for the same reason makes the slaveless primeval situation end negatively via the labour of

women and children. And in his utopian scheme for women, Aristophanes grants everybody equal property, but does not manage this without the labour of slaves. In other words: abundance, equality and abolition of slavery are all very well, but only for a short time, in an imaginary world. In such a chaos, reality would disintegrate.

Herodotos 3.18 relates an Ethiopian custom of laying 'a table of Helios': at night boiled meat is taken to a meadow and during the day everybody is allowed to eat it. The natives, however, say that it is the earth itself that time and again produces this food. Here again the *automaton*/luxury motif is found in combination with the notion of equality. The sacrificial loaves in the temple of Kronos in Alexandria, which everybody was allowed to eat, come to mind. Such images bring us to the concept of Utopia, which also is related to the Saturnalia.⁷⁰ Here, too, elements of the *automaton* and easy living prevail: they are found as early as Homer's land of the Phaeacians, in the tales of the Hyperboreans, of Iamboulos' Sun Islands and of Euhemerus' Panchaia. In the latter two, slavery is absent. But these are Utopias of a fairy-tale nature ('utopia d'evasione'), which by definition lie at the edge of or over the edge of the world, the *eschatiai*, an all but unreachable land, and at the same time a 'land of no return', like Elysium after death. But as soon as the political or social Utopia takes on a model function as 'utopia di ricostruzione'⁷¹ and consequently is not absolutely inconceivable (Hippodamos, Plato, Aristotle), labour is indispensable and slavery a matter of course. In the Messianic utopian vistas accompanying the accession of Roman emperors⁷² we also find in great detail all the themes of abundance and *isonomia*, the annulment of debts and disappearance of poverty – all this sometimes summarised as a liberation from chains – but there is no question of a liberation of slaves. What is possible in the fairy-tale is undesirable in real life, it is even threatening. Lucian (*Saturn.* 33) says that equality is most pleasant at table, but that Kronos grants this equality only during holidays (ibid. 30).

Such aspects of the Kronia point out a marked ambivalence in the Greek concept of harmony: the ideal of freedom and abundance is unstable, it cannot last, because it carries the seed of real social anomie and anarchy. It is a dangerous game, just as was the dice-playing allowed to the slaves: on this day the relationships are open, the dice are thrown and there is the possibility that it is not the master but the slave who will win. This is equality no longer, it is the world turned upside down.

5.2 The Paradox of the Festive Conflict

The second socially functional aspect of the Kronia and related festivals is that of the reversal of roles. There is no harmony here; on the contrary there is intensified and formalised *conflict*: the hierarchy is turned the other way round. Cockaigne and the world reversed very frequently go hand in hand. *Adunata* often herald the coming of the Golden Age.⁷³ But the radical shifting

of boundaries in role-reversal offers not only greater boisterousness but also deeper disturbance: here, anarchy has a truly subversive character. Once again, comparisons with comedy and Utopia are enlightening.

The freedom of slaves in Old Comedy never implies their dominance. Aristophanes experiments to the very limit with reversal between the sexes, but he is extremely reticent on the topic of reversal between slaves and citizens. Slaves do not even assist in the revolution of women: 'De pouvoir servile, il n'est pas et il ne peut pas être question.'⁷⁴ The reason is evident: even as a comic scene, this image would meet with resistance: slave rebellion was a structurally feared phenomenon, and by no means an imaginary one.

One can even less expect, therefore, to find rule by slaves in Utopia. It is possible to imagine a reversed world, often transformed in images from the animal world in which the weak gain the victory, for instance in the chiliastic expectance of salvation, but slaves ruling society is a notion that can enter the heads only of slaves. As a matter of fact, Eunous, the leader of a slave revolt in Sicily, does call himself king and has his former masters wait upon him; the Circumcelliones have their carts pulled by their former lords.⁷⁵ This might have been *their* idea, but it certainly was not *the* idea. It is precisely the task of ritual, drama and wish-dream to canalise and neutralise any excessive inclinations in this direction. The reversal of roles is supposed to legitimise its opposite, not itself.

Ritual is more direct than literary representation. It is understandable that ritual reversal, however necessary as a 'holiday' of limited duration, includes a strongly threatening component. Images of reversal may, as has been said, precede or accompany the Golden Age, but they also, and often, precede or accompany apocalyptic catastrophe. In strong contrast to the Messianic images of reversal during the early imperial era, the text of Tertullian *Apologeticum* 20: 'humble ones are raised, high ones are brought down' serves as an announcement not of the realm of bliss but of a period of chaos and catastrophe: 'justice becomes a rarity ... the natural shapes are replaced by monsters', exactly as in Egyptian prophecies and elsewhere.⁷⁶ Reversal, therefore, may point in two directions: to total freedom = abundance, and to total freedom = lawlessness, chaos. One of the implications is that rites of rebellion carry the seeds of real revolution. Aeneas Tacticus 22.17 states that festivals are the most frequent occasions of revolution in the state,⁷⁷ and that goes *a fortiori* for those festivals that carry an element of ritual rebellion, as is illustrated by the rich tradition of carnival and revolution in particular.⁷⁸

In both aspects of the socially legitimate *licentia*, the harmonious and the conflictive, we observe a violent contradiction: on one hand they aim at relaxation by means of laughter, elation and abundance, on the other they refer to the impossible and the undesirable: chaos, revolution, and, in close alliance with these, murder and manslaughter, lawlessness, the disintegration of society. What is a social ambiguity here, has been made the structural theme in the cosmic-mythical model.

6. Kronos as King of Primeval Chaos

Like other cultures, Athens had several New Year festivals. One of these, the Anthesteria festival,⁷⁹ shows an all but complete set of characteristics of the 'grande festa': the opening of the wine-jars (*primitiae* situation), *licentia* in the form of ridicule and abuse, collective wine-drinking in which children and slaves were allowed to share, a sacred wedding of the king. In addition to these joyous aspects there are threatening elements: the arrival of Kares or Keres, primeval inhabitants or ghosts of the dead who are given a warm welcome and subsequently wished away, banquets for the dead, the temporary closing down of the temples in an atmosphere of doom. In all respects, clearly, there is a temporary return of chaos in its two aspects, mythically represented in the commemoration of deluge and re-creation. The official New Year's Day, however, fell in midsummer, in the month of Hekatombaion, formerly called Kronion. Two veritable New Year festivals, the Synoikia and the Panathenaea, are preceded by two festivals that have the typical structure of the incision festival, marking the period 'in between': the Skira and the Kronia.⁸⁰ The Skira on 12 Skirophorion shows the following characteristics: an *apopompe* of the priests and the primeval king out of the city – in the myth the king is killed; women, at liberty to call meetings, take over men's roles; boisterous fun and playing at dice; a sacrifice of an ox, which is called *disertis verbis bouphonia*, 'murder'. A complex, therefore, in which joy and gloom unite in role reversals and the abolition of the normal social relationships.

These festivals are not connected with Kronos, but the Kronia festival in which, as we have seen, role reversal and *licentia* dominate, and which falls between Skira and the New Year festivals, is emphatically dedicated to Kronos, in the month that originally bore his name. In light of the cosmic-religious interpretation of the festivals surrounding the turn of the year, several of our earlier observations suddenly take on an understandable and structural meaning. 'Kronos ist mythologisch, nicht kultisch', Nilsson said. He is more right than he realised; indeed, this statement touches the heart of the matter. During the festivals mentioned – although this is not known of the Kronia – one of the expressions of stagnation of the 'normal' existence is the closing down of the temples: the contact with the gods currently ruling is broken, the pre-Olympian era returns temporarily. It is precisely Kronos' mythical character as god of a primordial time that explains his presence in the un-cultic vacuum between the times. He is primeval chaos in person, in its dual aspect of freedom as a joy and freedom as a threat. Lacking fixed boundaries, there is a high 'entropy'. The unstable equilibrium may be upset any time. Ritually, this is expressed by, among other things, the freedom to play dice and gamble; in this chaos between times, fate still must be determined: the 'fixing of the fate' in Babylon is an annual re-creation, in Italy Fortuna Primigenia reigns when Jupiter is still *puer*.⁸¹ Everything is still unsettled, as is the question of who will be boss: slave or master. In Greece, too, this era before history or this time

between the times, is characterised by 'abnormal' creatures which do not fall in natural categories: Kronos' era is the period of giants, creatures with a hundred hands, monsters and Cyclopes. The Thessalian Peloria festival – a typical reversal festival – refers to mythical giants from the primeval era.⁸² As 'masks' they may return temporarily in the period of crisis between the times. In fact this is a variation of the return of the dead, who also belong to another time and another reality: the world of the dead, too, is 'upside down'⁸³ and shows the ambivalence of 'dämonische Bedrohung oder die eschatologische Verheissung' (B. Gladigow).⁸⁴ In the matter of the Kares or Keres the two images, primeval creatures and the dead, seem to intermingle.

Kronos is the god in chains: already in Hesiod the terms 'binding' and 'fettering' are typically connected with his myth. His statue is 'chained', perhaps already in the Hellenistic period, certainly in Rome. Kronos does exist, but only in mythical times: before the present reality (during the primeval era), or after it (death), or at the outermost edges of this reality (the *eschatiai*). He is either a prisoner or asleep. Without being able to go into details I interpret his representations with covered head as follows: as always in the Greek-Roman world, covering or wrapping up the head indicates that the person concerned is (temporarily) withdrawn from the present reality, is in (or in contact with) 'the other reality'.⁸⁵ This is the essence of Kronos. His era, however, returns once more in the chaos of the year festival: he is unchained, he wakes up or he is revived and again assumes kingship for a limited period: the return of the *basileus*, a term and a concept that for Greek and certainly for Athenian ears carries the primordial connotation of the beginning of time,⁸⁶ as elsewhere, too, the return of the wish-time is closely connected with the figure of a king (the return of the 'sleeping' king, slave risings, Eunous, etc., *Saturnalia princeps, rex*; Prins Carnaval). His rule refers to the dual freedom of unlimited abundance and abolition of the established hierarchy on one hand, and of the absence of law and standards, and of rebellion, on the other. All this is expressed by the mythical and ritual images that we have described in the first part of this study, the utopian images of abundance and *euphoria* and the dystopical ones of the absence of moral standards, inhumanity and rebellion.

7. Conclusions

Our conclusions can be expressed concisely, because they are in fact obvious from the foregoing. We have asked how we can explain the violent contradictions in Kronos' myth and ritual if we do not content ourselves with the unsatisfactory emergency-solutions that resort to the fortuities of derivation, acculturation and evolution. Our solution, to which, indeed, others have given the first impulses,⁸⁷ is that the contradiction between the joyous and the frightening aspects of the Kronos complex is a structural characteristic of the god and his religious context. The explanation of this lies in his function

as god of the periods of reversal and chaos. We have found that there are ambiguities on two levels. In the functionalistic view, the legitimate anarchy nears the limits of the permissible. The collective culinary orgy as well as, *a fortiori*, the reversed hierarchy contains the seeds of the socially impossible and undesirable. The oxymoron of euphoria and panic reaches a paroxysm in the Rhodian Kronia: the victim is given wine to drink and then murdered. In the cosmic-religious view, on the other hand, abundance and role reversal appear to be images of the renewed experience of primeval chaos that is Utopia and dystopia at once: the relaxation of the banquets of the Golden Age under Kronos in one and the same image as the 'sardonic' tension of Kronos' Thyestian repasts.⁸⁸ This means that on both levels the contradiction is a structural characteristic of Kronos' myth and ritual and that, therefore, attempts to soften the contradiction or 'render it harmless' via an exclusive appeal to historical development are not only superfluous but unjustified.

Our main question concerned the relationship between myth and ritual. How are we to see this relationship in the case at hand and to what extent is mutual dependence present here? W. B. Kristensen wrote long ago: 'Saturnus was a slave himself'.⁸⁹ He was berated for his folly and praised for his courage.⁹⁰ The brachylogy of this phrasing must lead inevitably to misunderstandings. None the less it refers directly to the question we have asked ourselves. Is the mythical 'unchaining' of Kronos a projection of the slave's freedom at festivals such as the Kronia? Or, on the other hand, was the myth of the Golden Age the example for the relaxation of the Kronia festivals? Furthermore, how are we, then, to interpret the dependence of the dark and cruel aspects of myth and rite: was human sacrifice the example of or an imitation of Kronos' mythical atrocities?

It will be clear by now that there can be no question of such a one-sided dependence of myth and rite, in any direction. By no means do I deny that the myth and ritual complex we have described is a crystallised product of processes to which many influences – non-Greek as well as Greek – have contributed and whose details escape us. But the tenets of anthropology and comparative religion enable us to design a hypothesis about the fundamental connection between the mythical and ritual components underlying this process of assimilation and evolution.

Our starting point is the statement that Kronos, for whatever reason, disappeared from active cult and became a 'mythical' god, and that this god *consequently* was considered to be a representative of the mythical era before history proper, which began with Zeus and the Olympians. Given this essential point, this kernel was open to connections with two chains of association, in principle independent but psychologically closely related, with regard to the mythical character of this primeval era and the ritual experiencing of the same atmosphere at some points of stagnation during the year. Both these associations are characterised by the phrase 'absence of order'. Mythically, the primeval era is represented in many cultures as chaos of two types: a positive,

utopian one and a negative one – the catastrophic annihilation of human values. Equally, the absence of order is expressed ritually on all sides by feasts of abundance on one hand and reversal of roles on the other. Here, ‘abnormality’ may lead to associations with murder in the form of human sacrifice. Both myth and rite ‘say’ the same thing: the utopian *cannot*, the dystopian *must not* exist ‘in reality’. In myth, this is expressed by the projection of these images on the *eschatiai* of time and space, Kronos’ mythical territory. In ritual it is expressed by realising the impossible for just a few hours and thus underlining its exceptional character: the relaxation and reversal are indeed subservient to society’s well-functioning, but as images of either the impossible or the undesirable and therefore as exceptions. Whereas such festivals are understood widely as a temporary return of chaos – and show by their nature every characteristic of it – in Greece it was natural to associate them with Kronos’ mythical era, which was thought to return for one day.

All this justifies the conclusion that we do have in this complex, indeed, an example of correspondence between myth and rite in ‘structure and atmosphere’, and in such a way that both ‘symbolic processes deal with the same type of experience in the same affective mode’, and this ‘*pari passu*’, according to the postulates referred to in our introductory section.

Notes

1. In treating this subject I have had to restrict myself most severely. With regard to what is said here in the Introduction I must refer to my detailed review of the myth-and-ritual discussion in *Lampas*, 17 (1984) 194–246, which is at present being edited for a book in English on ‘Ambiguities in Greek and Roman Religion’. There, too, the sources of the quotations will be found; at the time I had not seen C. Calame’s ‘Le processus symbolique’, *Doc. de travail. Centro Intern. Semiot. Lingu.*, 128/9 (1983). Furthermore I have confined myself in this article to essentials and kept the body of notes, especially, as concise as possible. An originally planned addition in the form of a discussion of the Roman Saturnalian festival also had to be omitted entirely for reasons of space.

2. Thus the recent formulation by F. Graf, *ZPE*, 55 (1984) 254.

3. Materials and discussions in: M. Mayer, ‘Kronos’, in *Roscher Lexikon* II, 1 (1897) 1452–573; M. Pohlenz, ‘Kronos und die Titanen’, *Neue Jahrb.*, 79(1916) 549–94; idem, ‘Kronos’ in *RE* XI (1921) 1982–2018. Recent literature in W. Fauth, ‘Kronos’, in *Kleine Pauly* 3 (1979) 355–64. These authors are cited henceforth by name and year only.

4. A structuralist analysis of the Hesiodic myth: M. Detienne and J.-P. Vernant, *Les ruses de l’intelligence. La mêtis des Grecs* (Paris, 1974) 62–103.

5. See M. L. West, *Hesiod. Works and Days* (Oxford 1978); W. J! Verdenius, *A Commentary on Hesiod Works and Days*, vu 1–382 (Leiden, 1985) ad loc.

6. The texts in *ANET* 120–6. A short and recent treatment with extensive bibliography: Burkert, *S&H*, 18–22.

7. W. Burkert, ‘Oriental Myth and Literature in the Iliad’, in R. Hägg (ed.), *The Greek Renaissance of the Eighth Century B.C. Tradition and Innovation* (Stockholm, 1983) 51–6; Burkert, *OE*.

8. Even allowing for the differentiation in categories of cannibalism as suggested by Detienne, *Dionysos*, 136.

9. E.g. Plato, *Resp.* 2,377E–378D; *Eutyphro* 5E–6A; Cicero, *ND* 2,24,63ff.

10. See: *Lexikon des frühgriechischen Epos*, s. v.; Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque*, s.v.

11. Thus: J. E. Harrison, *Themis*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, 1927) 495; 'Kronos immer *basileus* genannt': M. P. Nilsson, *Geschichte dergriechischen Religion* I, 3rd edn (Munich, 1967) 511 n 4. In Hesiod: *Th*: 462,476,486,491; *Erga* 111, 169ff. More references in Pohlenz (1916) 558 and (1921) 1988; Mayer (1897) 1458; on the regime of Kronos, 'das ja immer eine Königsherrschaft ist': B. Gatz, *Weltalter, goldene Zeit und sinnverwandte Vorstellungen* (Hildesheim, 1967) 134 and register A3a; A4b.

12. Cf. II. 5.271; 14.192 and 243; Hes. *Th*. 168,459,473,495.

13. Cf. L. Gernet and A. Boulanger, *Le Génie grec dans la religion*, 2nd edn (Paris, 1970) 89.

14. The two most accessible surveys: A. O. Lovejoy and G. Boas, *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity* (Baltimore, 1935) 23–102; Gatz, *Weltalter*.

15. On these motifs see Gatz, *Weltalter*, 114ff and the literature cited below, note 67.

16. H. Hommel, 'Das hellenische Ideal vom einfachen Leben', *Studium Generale*, 11 (1958) 742ff; R. Visscher, *Das einfache Leben. Wort und Motivgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zu einem aktuellen Thema* (Göttingen, 1965).

17. See Pohlenz (1921) 1998ff.

18. Kronos was often assimilated with divinities of Asia Minor: K. Meuli, *Gesammelte Schriften* II (Basle and Stuttgart, 1975) 1076; L. Robert, *Hellenica*, 7 (1949) 50–4.

19. W. B. Kristensen, 'De antieke opvatting van dienstbaarheid', *Med. Kon. Ak. Wet.* (1934) = idem, *Verzamelde bijdragen tot kennis derantiekedogsdiensten* (Amsterdam, 1947) 215; I. Scheftelowitz, 'Das Schlingen und Netzmotiv', *Rel. Vers. Vorarb.*, 12 (1912) 8. On the other hand 'Wecken und Losen sind verschiedene Bilder für denselben religiösen Gedanken': Meuli, *Gesammelte Schriften* II, 1076.

20. Nilsson, *Griechischen Religion*, 511; U. v. Wilamowitz, 'Kronos und die Titanen', *Sitzber. Berlin* (1929) 38 = Wilamowitz, *Kleine Schriften*, 2nd edn, V, 2 (Berlin, 1971) 157–83.

21. For full references and more details on the cult see: Pohlenz (1921) 1982–6. On the *pōpanon*: L. Deubner, *Attische Feste* (Berlin, 1932) 154.

22. Collected by Pohlenz (1921) 1984f; Nilsson, *Griechischen Religion*, 512; Wilamowitz, 'Kronos', 36; *RE*, s.v. *Kronion*.

23. It is irrelevant to my investigation whether this is indeed a historical human sacrifice or, more likely, a legendary sacrifice framed on the theme of the cruel myth, such as the case treated by A. Henrichs, 'Human Sacrifice in Greek Religion', in *Le Sacrifice dans l'antiquité* (Entretiens Hardt 27, Geneva, 1981) esp. 222 n 6.

24. E.g. Philo of Byblos *ap. Porph. De abst.* 2.56; Euseb. *Praep. ev.* 1.38 d, 40 c; *Or. pro Const.* 13.

25. The *locus classicus*: Diod. 20.14,6. See M. Le Glay, *Saturne Africain* (Paris, 1966).

26. E.g. Dion. Hal. 1.38.2; Diod. 5.66.5; Demon in Schol. Horn. *Od.* 20.302; Suda, s.v.

Σαρδάνιος γέλως on which see M. Pohlenz, *Beri. Phil. Wochenschr.* (1916) 949. Cf. D. Arnould, 'Mourir de rire dans l'Odyssee: les rapports avec le rire sardonique et le rire dément', *BAGB* (1985) 177–86.

27. See Pohlenz (1916) 553; (1921) 2009f for references.

28. On sacrificial cakes and bloodless sacrifices see A. Henrichs, 'The Eumenides and Wineless Libations in the Derveni Papyrus', in *Atti del XVII Congresso Int. di Papirologia*, II (Naples, 1984), 255–68, esp. 257–61.

29. This festival and related ceremonies of the 'Saturnalian' type both in Greece and Rome have been discussed many times. The most important discussions are: M. P. Nilsson, *Griechische Feste* (Berlin, 1906) 35–40, 393; F. Bömer, 'Untersuchungen über die Religion der Sklaven in Griechenland und Rom', III, *Abh. Ak. Mainz, Geistesund Sozialw. Kl.* (1961) 415–37; H. Kenner, *Das Phänomen der verkehrten Welt in der griechisch-römischen Antike* (Klagenfurt, 1970) 87–95. I have not seen Ph. Bourboulis, *Ancient Festivals of the Saturnalian Type* (Thessalonika, 1964). A short summary: Burkert, *GR* 231f. On the Attic Kronia in particular: Deubner, *Attische Feste*, 152–5. In a recent informative article on 'Poseidon's Festival at the Winter Solstice', *CQ*, 34 (1984) 1–16; N. Robertson curiously underestimates the fundamental meaning of role reversal both in festivals of Poseidon and in general.

30. Some scholars argue that the masters have retired from the festival by this late period (Nilsson *RE* 11 (1921) 1975f; Bömer, 'Die Religion der Sklaven', 417), or, even more ingeniously, 'Probably the masters only appeared for the first course or two ...' (H. W. Parke, *Festivals of the Athenians* (London, 1977) 30), but it is equally possible that only the most conspicuous features have found a place in the reports.

31. Bömer, 'Die Religion der Sklaven', 179; Polykrates *ap. Athen.* 4.139 C ff (*FGrH* 588 F 1). All other references may be found in the literature cited above, n29.

32. See the extensive discussions in Mayer (1897) 1549–73; Pohlenz (1921) 2014ff.

33. Macrobi. *Sat.* 1.8.5; Min. Fel. 22.5; Stat. *Silv.* 1.6.4 (and commentary by Vollmer); Arnob. 4.24. Cf. Bömer, 'Religion der Sklaven', 425. On fettered gods in general see: G. A. Lobeck, *Aglaophamus* (Königsberg, 1829) 275; Meuli, *Gesammelte Schriften* II, 1035–81; M. Delcourt, *Héphaistos ou la légende*

du *magicien* (Paris, 1957) 18ff; 65ff.

34. *FGrH Coram.* 244 F 118, followed by Meuli, *Gesammelte Schriften* II, 1039 n9.

35. A. Dieterich, *Abraxas* (Leipzig, 1891) 76ff.

36. On the symbolism of chaos see literature cited by H. S. Versnel, 'Destruction, *Devotio* and Despair in a Situation of Anomy: The Mourning for Germanicus in Triple Perspective', in G. Piccaluga (ed.) *Perennitas* (Rome, 1980) 591 n 209 and 594 n 216; M. Eliade, *Traité d'histoire des religions*, 2nd edn (Paris, 1964) Chs XI and XII, *passim*. Cf. below, note 76.

37. Wilamowitz, 'Kronos', 36; P. Vidal-Naquet, *Le Chasseur noir*, 2nd edn (Paris, 1983) 363.

38. References in note 10 above.

39. Deubner, *Attische Feste*, 154f; K. Marót, 'Kronos und die Titanen', *SMSR*, 8 (1932) 48–82; 189–213, esp. 67 n 2.

40. Pherecydes in schol. Apoll. Rhod. 1.554; 2.1235; Pind. *Pyth.* 3.1ff; 4.115; *Nem.* 3.47; Apollod. 1.9; Verg. *Georg.* 3.92. Pan, too, is the son of Kronos in one tradition: Ph. Borgeaud, *Recherches sur le dieu Pan* (Rome 1979) 66f.

41. Pohlenz (1921) 2006; K. Marót, 'Kronos', 58 and 213.

42. See H. S. Versnel, 'Apollo and Mars one hundred years after Roscher', *Visible Religion*, 4 (1986) 134–72.

43. Wilamowitz, 'Kronos', 37; Nilsson, *Griechischen Religion*, 514; other references in Bömer, 'Religion der Sklaven', 420 n 2; E. Meyer, *Kleine Schriften* II, 39ff.

44. Nilsson, *Griechischen Religion*, 36; Bömer, 'Religion der Sklaven', 422.

45. Pohlenz (1921) 1998, where other references can be found.

46. J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough* 3rd edn, III, 9ff; VI, 351ff; IX (Aftermath) 290ff.

47. A. Lang, *Magic and Religion* (London, 1901) 82ff. For (critical) views on Frazer in general see Versnel (above, note 1) 234 n 15 and 239 n 82.

48. Meuli, *Gesammelte Schriften* II, 1034f.

49. For more literature on rites of reversal see Versnel, 'Destruction', 582ff; idem (above, note 1) 241 n 99; 242 n 115.

50. F. Douglass, *My Bondage and my Freedom* (New York, 1855) 253ff and the comments by E. Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll* (New York, 1974) 577ff, both cited by J. N. Bremmer, 'Myth and Ritual in Ancient Rome: the Nonae Capratinae' in J. N. Bremmer and N. M. Horsfall, *Roman Myth and Mythography* (London, 1987) 85f. A. C. Zijderfeld, *Reality through a Looking-glass* (London, 1982) demonstrates the same awareness in medieval carnival-clubs.

51. G. Balandier, *Political Anthropology* (Harmondsworth, 1972) 41. Cf. I. M. Lewis, *Social Anthropology in Perspective* (Harmondsworth, 1976) 142, with interesting parallels of modern 'feasts of fools'. Similar views on chiliastic movements: A. F. C. Wallace, *Religion: An Anthropological View* (New York, 1966); W. E. Muhlmann, *Nativismus und Chiliasmus. Studien zur Psychologie, Soziologie und historischer Kasuistik der Umsiurbewegungen* (Berlin, 1961).

52. M. Gluckman, *Custom and Conflict in Africa* (Oxford, 1959) 109–36 from which I quote; idem, *Order and Rebellion in Tribal Africa* (London, 1963) 110–36. His first remarks: *An Analysis of the Sociological Theories of B. Malinowski* (Oxford, 1949) 16.

53. B. Sutton Smith, 'Games of Order and Disorder' as quoted by V. W. Turner in B. A. Babcock(ed.), *The Reversible World* (Ithaca and London, 1978) 294.

54. Safety-valve: e.g. in P. Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (London, 1978) 202ff; N. Z. Davies, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (London, 1975) 122ff. The aspect of legitimization: *inter al.* in Zijderfeld, *Reality* and H. Pleij, *Het gilde van de Blauwe Schuit. Literatuur, volksfeest en burgermoraal in de late middeleeuwen*, 2nd edn (Amsterdam, 1983) 63, 87, 241f; N. Schindler, 'Kameval, Kirche und die verkehrte Welt', *Jahrb. f. Volkskunde*, NF 7(1984) 9–57. For some specific cases see: A. H. Gait, 'Carnival on the Island of Pantellaria', *Ethnology*, 12 (1973) 325–39; D. Gilmore, 'Carnaval in Fuenmayor: Class Conflict and Social Cohesion in an Andalusian Town', *Journ. Anthropol. Res.*, 32 (1975) 331–49; L. Barletta, *Il carnevale del 1764 a Napoli. Protesta e integrazione in uno spazio urbano* (Naples, 1981).

55. This was demonstrated by E. Norbeck, 'African Rituals of Conflict', *Amer. Anthropol.*, 65 (1963) 1254–79 with a mild criticism of Gluckman.

56. P. L. Berger, 'Some Second Thoughts on Substantive versus Functional Definitions of Religion', *Journ. Scient. Study Rel.*, 75(1974) 125–33.

57. P. L. Berger and T. Luckman, *The Social Construction of Reality* (New York, 1971) 121.

58. These concepts are being used by P. Weidkuhn, 'The Quest for Legitimate Rebellion. Towards a Structuralist Theory of Rituals of Reversal', *Religion*, 7 (1977) 167–88, who finds his inspiration in Eliade.

59. Several New Year festivals in one year: M. P. Nilsson, *Primitive Time-reckoning* (Lund, 1920) 270.

60. M. Eliade, *Le mythe de l'éternel retour. Archétypes et répétition* (Paris, 1949) Ch. II, pp. 83ff; idem, *Traité d'histoire des religions*, 2nd edn (Paris, 1964) 326–43; V. Lanternari, *La grande festa. Storio del Capodanno nelle civiltà primitive*, 2nd edn (Bari, 1976).

61. The death of a king may provoke the very same associations and imagery: Versnel, 'Destruction' on mourning, chaos and anomy.

62. On chaos as 'l'absolue liberté' and the ambiguity of the sentiments involved, see Eliade, *Traité*, 76 and *passim*.

63. On the cohesive force of the Greek festivals see: F. Dunand, 'Sens et fonction de la fête dans la Grèce hellénistique. Les cérémonies en l'honneur d'Artemis Leucophryène', *Dial Hist. Ane.*, 4 (1978) 201–18.

64. The German title of the translated version of J. Servier, *Histoire de l'utopie* (Munich, 1971).

65. The relationship was already noticed by F. M. Cornford, *The Origin of Attic Comedy* (London, 1914); on the social function of Greek comedy see, e.g., J.-C. Carrière, *Le Carnaval et la politique. Une introduction à la comédie grecque* (Paris, 1979); for Rome see E. Segal, *Roman Laughter*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, Mass., 1970).

66. Cf. A. C. Zijdeveld, 'The Sociology of Humour and Laughter', *Current Sociology*, 31 (1983) 1–103, esp. 47.

67. On the *truphe* motif see: H. Langerbeck, 'Die Vorstellung von Schlaraffen-land in der alten attischen Komödie', *Zeitschr. f. Volksk.*, 59 (1963) 192–204; W. Fauth, 'Kulinarisches und Utopisches in der griechischen Komödie', *Wiener Stud.*, 7 (1973) 39–62. On the *automaton* motif: Gatz, *Weltalter*, 118 and register B 1,1; H.J. de Jonge, 'BOTPYC BOHCEI', in M.J. Vermaseren (éd.), *Studies in Hellenistic Religions* (Leiden, 1979) 37–49. On absence of slavery: R. von Pöhlmann, *Geschichte der sozialen Frage und des Sozialismus in der antiken Welt*, 3rd edn (Munich, 1925); J. Pecirka, 'Aristophanes' Ekklesiazusen und die Utopien in der Krise der Polis', *Wiss. Zeitschr. Humboldt Univ. zu Berlin, Gesellsch.-Sprachw. Reihe*, 12 (1963) 215ff; Vidal-Naquet, *Le Chasseur noir*, 230ff.

68. Theopompus *FGrH* 115 F 215 says that in Arcadia masters and slaves were sitting at the same tables and sharing the same food and drink.

69. On this passage as a conjunction of utopia and elysium: L. Gernet, 'La cité future et le pays des morts' in idem, *Anthropologie de la Grèce antique* (Paris, 1968) 139; Vidal-Naquet, *Le Chasseur noir*, 363.

70. A survey in J. Ferguson, *Utopias of the Classical World* (London 1975). On easy living, e.g. A. Giannini, 'Mito e utopia nella letteratura greca prima di Platone', *Rend. 1st. Lomb.*, 101 (1967) 109ff. On the Phaeacians: Vidal-Naquet, *Le Chasseur noir*, 60ff; on the Hellenistic utopias see the literature cited by M. Zumschlinge, *Euhemerios. Staats-theoretische und Staats-utopische Motive* (Diss., Bonn, 1976). On absence of slavery in utopias: J. Vogt, 'Slavery in Greek Utopias' in: idem, *Ancient Slavery and the Ideal of Man* (Cambridge, Mass., 1975) 26–38, esp. 29ff; Gatz, *Weltalter*, 127 and register B4c.

71. The terms are introduced by Giannini, *Mito e utopia*.

72. See the references to epigraphical sources: Versnel, 'Destruction', 551ff. The literary sources in Gatz, *Weltalter*, 131 ff. Releasing of fetters e.g. in Philo, *Legatio ad Gaium* 146. This is a general image of the coming of the millenium: W. A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians. The Social World of the Apostle Paul* (New Haven and London, 1983) 184f.

73. Kenner, *Das Phänomen*, 70 gives examples and literature in n 214; S. Luria 'Die Ersten werden die Letzten sein', *Klio*, 22(1929) 405–31 regards these as two stages of an historical process, which is quite unnecessary.

74. Vidal-Naquet, *Le Chasseur noir*, 226 and 267–88; cf. N. Loraux, *Les Enfants d'Athéna* (Paris, 1981) 157–96; J. C. Carrière, *Le Carnaval*; L. Bertelli, 'L'utopia sulla scena: Aristofane e la parodia della città', *Civiltà class. e crisi.*, 4 (1983) 215–63. E. David, *Aristophanes and Athenian Society of the Early Fourth Century BC* (Leiden, 1984) rightly contrasts this with the general criticism of social misuses.

75. On the messianistic side of Eunous' revolt see P. Green, 'The First Sicilian Slave War', *Past and Present*, 22 (1962) 87–93. On the Circumcellions: Versnel, 'Destruction', 552 and P. G. G. M. Schulten, *De Circumcellionen. Een sociaal-religieuze beweging in de late oudheid* (Diss., Leiden, 1984).

76. On these very interesting Egyptian prophecies see, e.g., S. Luria, 'Die Ersten'; J. Bergman, 'Introductory Remarks on Apocalypticism in Egypt', and J. Assman, 'Königsdogma und Heilserwartung. Politische und kulturelle Chaos-beschreibungen in Aegyptischen Texten', both in: D. Hellholm, *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East* (Tubingen, 1983) 51–60 and 345–78.

77. Some instances: Xen. *Hell.* 4.4.2–4; Aen. *Tact.* 17.3; Diod. 13.104.5. Festivals are also ideal opportunities for sudden attack. L. A. Losada, *The Fifth Column in the Peloponnesian War* (Leiden, 1972) 101; 11 If.

78. On carnival and revolution see the literature cited by J. N. Bremmer, *The Early Greek Concept of the Soul* (Princeton, 1983) 118 n 133.

79. On the Anthesteria see the discussion and literature in Bremmer, *ibid.*, 108–20.
80. A very good survey of this range of feasts in Burkert, *GR*, 227–34.
81. See the pertinent observations by A. Brelich, ‘Osservazioni sulle “esclusioni rituali” \ SMSR, 22 (1949/50) 16ff.
82. Thus Nilsson, *Griechische Feste*, 37. The *Pelores* are unconvincingly interpreted as the (great) dead by Meuli, *Gesammelte Schriften* II. Cf. Bremmer, *op. cit.*, 123. Even less can I accept that ‘the name *Peloria* is most naturally taken as designating the tables heaped with food’: Robertson, ‘Poseidon’s Festival’, 8.
83. J. Z. Smith, *Map is not Territory* (Leiden, 1978) 141–71.
84. B. Gladigow, ‘Jenseitsvorstellungen und Kulturkritik’, *Zeitschr. Religions-und Geistesgesch.*, 26 (1974) 308.
85. H. Freyer, *Caput velare* (Diss., Tübingen, 1963) is quite unsatisfactory in this respect.
86. See, e.g., R. Drews, *Basileus. The Evidence for Kingship in Geometric Greece* (New Haven and London, 1983) 7–9.
87. I mention here only: Meuli, *Gesammelte Schriften* II and ‘Der Ursprung der Fastnacht’, *ibid.* I, 283–99; A. Brelich, ‘Osservazioni’ and *idem*, *Tre variazioni romane sul tema delle origini*, 2nd edn (Rome, 1976) 83–95; Burkert, *GR*, 198: ‘Kronos, the god of the first age, of reversal, and possibly of the last age’, and 232: ‘and so at his festival there is a reversion to that ideal former age, but a reversion that of course cannot last’.
88. *Katēpine*—not only in Hes. *Theog.* (above, [section 1](#); Burkert, this volume, [Ch. 2](#), section 3) but also in Plato *Eutyphro* 6A and Apollod. 1.1.5 – is the very expression of this gluttony run wild.
89. Kristensen (above, note 19) 15.
90. ‘einfach absurd’: Bömer, ‘Religion der Sklaven’, 425; ‘un lavoro geniale per impostazione e per alcuni intuizioni’: Brelich, ‘Osservazioni’ 16 n 3.

Spartan Genealogies: The Mythological Representation of a Spatial Organisation

Claude Calame

Translated by A. Habib

1. The Comparative Perspective: Anthroponym as Spatial Symbol

From the archaic period onwards, the Greek taste for genealogies is striking: there are genealogies of gods (Hesiod), of heroes (Hekataios), of legendary kings whether related in epic (Eumelos at Corinth) or heading the chronographical sequence defined by the archon list (Athens).¹ This proliferation of genealogical activity is in no way surprising: its double function of measuring historical time whilst linking the present of the city to its legendary past is well known. Sparta is no exception, even if for us moderns there survive only late traces of this interest, in Pausanias and in the 'Library' attributed to Apollodorus. But as early as the seventh century BC we find in Tyrtaios echoes of a royal genealogy linking the rulers of Sparta with the legendary Herakleidai. And is it not precisely to this type of genealogy that the lectures given by the sophist Hippias at Sparta, described by Plato, owed their outstanding success?²

We shall turn later to the historical and literary problem of dating the Spartan royal genealogy. First let us read a passage that Pausanias significantly puts at the beginning of his description of Laconia:³

After the figures of Hermes we reach Laconia on the west. According to the tradition of the Lacedaemonians themselves, Lelex, an aboriginal, was the first king in this land, after whom his subjects were named Leleges. Lelex had a son Myles, and a younger one Polykaon. Polykaon retired into exile, the place of this retirement and its reason I will set forth elsewhere. On the death of Myles his son Eurotas succeeded to the throne. He led down to the

sea by means of a trench the stagnant water on the plain, and when it had flowed away, as what was left formed a river-stream, he named it Eurotas. Having no male issue, he left the kingdom to Lakedaimon, whose mother was Taygete, after whom the mountain was named, while according to report his father was none other than Zeus. Lakedaimon was wedded to Sparte, a daughter of Eurotas. When he came to the throne, he first changed the names of the land and its inhabitants, calling them after himself, and next he founded and named after his wife a city, which even down to our day has been called Sparta. Amyklas, too, son of Lakedaimon, wished to leave some memorial behind him, and built a town in Laconia. Hyakinthos, the youngest and most beautiful of his sons, died before his father, and his tomb is in Amyklai below the image of Apollo. On the death of Amyklas the empire came to Argalos, the eldest of his sons, and afterwards, when Argalos died, to Kynortas. Kynortas had a son Oibalos. He took a wife from Argos, Gorgophone, the daughter of Perseus, and begat a son Tyndareus, with whom Hippokoon disputed about the kingship, claiming the throne on the ground of being the elder. With the aid of Ikarios and his partisans he far surpassed Tyndareus in power, and forced him to retire in fear; the Lacedaemonians say that he went to Pellana, but a Messenian legend about him is that he fled to Aphareus in Messenia, Aphareus being the son of Perieres and the brother of Tyndareus on his mother's side. The story goes on to say that he settled at Thalamai in Messenia, and that his children were born to him when he was living there. Subsequently Tyndareus was brought back by Herakles and recovered his throne. His sons too became kings, as did Menelaos the son of Atreus and son-in-law of Tyndareus, and Orestes the husband of Hermione the daughter of Menelaos. On the return of the Herakleidai in the reign of Teisamenos, son of Orestes, both districts, Messene and Argos, had kings put over them; Argos had Temenos and Messene Kresphontes. In Lacedaemon, as the sons of Aristodemos were twins, there arose two royal houses; for they say that the Pythian priestess approved.

Anyone sensitive to the discursive representation of space notices immediately the coincidence, in the first generation of the Spartan kings, between anthroponyms and toponyms: Eurotas, Taygete, Sparta, Lakedaimon, Amyklas are at the same time royal actors and specific local sites. To recount the sequence of matrimonial alliances and royal births is a strange way to stake out territorial space and to constitute political geography.

Yet the same process is met again in a more complex form at Greece's antipodes. The Iatmul, recently visited on the banks of the river Sepik in Papua-New Guinea, are in the habit of competing in long oral contests, with each clan's mythology as the stake. Why devote to a mythology so important a part of heated political debates bearing on men's families? The fact is that the mythological debate is essentially a matter of long lists of proper names; and

every name is related to a living member of the Iatmul community as well as to an ancestral figure, a mythological tale, a physical or biological phenomenon, but above all to a location in the Iatmul's real or mythological geography.⁴ It is a way of classifying the living, a way of tying them to the clan's history and to the universal physical organisation, a way, in fine, of representing space – in terms of course of social space with its corollary, economic order. This is how the Iatmul can debate a clan-estate problem by comparing lists of anthroponyms attributed to the mythical figures of the clans in question. If one disregards the strict genealogical organisation which Papuans on the banks of the Sepik set aside in favour of a series of substitutions on the paradigmatic axis, the parallel with ancient Sparta is positively striking.

Ideally we would gather other parallels that would enable us to reach an abstraction on a reality of a structural order; but lack of space precludes taking the comparison any further. At least it has the merit of showing the fruitfulness of the comparative perspective in explaining the religious phenomena of antiquity. Although Spartans are no Papuans, there is at Palimbei, as there was at Sparta, a sequence of anthroponyms designating legendary figures which notably enunciates a social space and a social organisation.

If the Papuan parallel points at least to the general function of setting up a series of mythological names, one may go on to ask why the Spartan anthroponymic sequence assumes the form of a genealogy. The question here is no longer that of the social role played by mythic discourse, but of the narrative function of its discursive and textual presentation. So it is no longer comparatism that is called for, but narrative analysis – even when the genealogical form, compared with the pattern that narratology has attempted to formulate, displays singular and even bewildering features.

Since genealogical narrative as seen from the narrative standpoint is essentially made of state-enunciates, and since the attribution of a series of predicate qualities to the semiotic subject concerned belongs to this category of enunciates, our analysis here will be particularly focused on the values each actor, introduced by the genealogy, is invested with – all the more so since in fact Greek authors draw readily from the meaning of proper names a confirmation of the qualities ascribed to the actors in the state-enunciates of the same narrative.⁵

2. Spartan Genealogy and its Spatial Development

2.1 Lelex and the Leleges: Autochthonous Generation

As in Athens, the first Spartan king was an autochthon. This primordial qualification fixes in Laconian soil the roots of a being whose name refers

nevertheless to a multitude of sites in continental Greece as well as in Ionia. An aboriginal population called Leleges is in fact attested in regions as diverse as Aitolia, Akarnania or Lokris in western Greece; Boeotia, Megara, or Thessaly in central Greece; even in Miletos and various places in the Troad. From a historical point of view, this diffusion of the Leleges appears to be part of the legendary tradition as soon as it can be observed in literary texts. In the *Iliad*, the Leleges are closely related to the Trojans since it sites them at Pedasos in the Troad and states that Laothoe, Priam's concubine, is the daughter of their king. Hesiod makes Lokros, one of the founders of Lokris, the ruler over the Leleges. And Alkaios mentions that the city of Antandros, an Aeolian town not far from the Trojan Mt Ida, is the foremost city of the Leleges.⁶ Besides Sparta, it is only according to the tradition of Leukas that the eponymous ruler of this omnipresent tribe of Leleges is considered as an autochthon. Elsewhere, at Megara for instance, Lelex appears bearing the features of a stranger, Poseidon's son, who, arriving from Egypt, took over the succession to the royal power after the Megarids adopted the Dorians' mores and language.⁷

Figure 8.1: The Aegean World



Whether they are descended from a king or born on their soil or from a ruler exiled from Egypt, or whether on the contrary they have their origin in Caria (as Herodotos seems to suggest) and are even Carian slaves, the Leleges represent in any case one of those aboriginal tribes, like the Pelasgians or the Carians themselves, to which the Greeks attributed the earliest occupation of

their own territory. Among these early tribes mentioned by the Greek narratives of the foundations of cities, modern historians have of course looked for the trail of a pre-Hellenic ethnic substratum and reconstituted a no less hypothetical historic process of population settlement in Greece. By these means they have attempted to confer a historic value on the migratory movements, of which aborigines are often the protagonists. The decipherment of Linear B and the setting back from the eighth century BC to the fourteenth century BC of the period when the Greek language was first in use has fortunately dealt a definitive blow to such historical speculations.⁸

Inevitably in the research into the origin of the Leleges there remain some conjectures regarding the etymology of the name they bear. Most likely, as with 'bar-barians', reduplication in the name of the Leleges indicates they spoke a language which was alien to Greek ears.⁹ In the various legends portraying them, the Hellenic successors of the Lelegian dynasts are generally occupied giving new names to cities founded by aboriginal tribes: this is a probable way for the imagination of legend to mark the passage from non-Greek to Greek. It seems that in the series of proper names which the Iatmul use for justifying their clan claims, the morphology of the first name in each list – unlike the other names, which are without exception *redende Namen* – does not lead to a directly decipherable signification: only from the second 'generation' does the anthroponym designate through its signifier and its morphology the qualities of the individual it is naming.¹⁰

Oscillating between autochthony and its opposite, territorial exteriority, the Lelegian ruler embodies in any case the otherness that will allow the assertion of identity. Hence his initial, aboriginal, position. As with every tale, genealogy begins its narrative process with a lack-situation, and the only 'action' in the Spartan genealogical narrative ascribed to King Lelex corresponds to his giving his subjects his own name, a name that in all probability signifies otherness. But this initial lack, through its autochthonous rooting and above all through the process of generation, contains in itself the elements of the semantic universe that is to be asserted. It is a way, as in the first phases of the Hesiodic theogony, of assuming and figuring the transition from an undifferentiated state to a first, semantically marked, existence.¹¹ And it will be noticed, significantly, that two traditions parallel to that of Pausanias give a wife to Lelex. Therefore differentiation does not occur through parthenogenesis, but is immediately constituted by the masculine/feminine duality. When embodied by a naiad or nymph, this feminine belongs also moreover to the outside and non-civilised field.¹²

2.2 Myles: the Space of Cereal Cultivation

In Pausanias' tradition, Lelex ends up by being the cause of differentiation, through the process of generation. Genealogical narrative attributes two sons and one daughter to Sparta's first sovereign. The eldest, Myles, carries in his

very name a trace of the action legend ascribes to him. Myles was in fact considered the first man to have invented the mill (*mule*) since he is the first to grind (*alesai*) corn in a place named Alesiai which was between the site of the future Sparta and Mt Taygetos. With this etymological double-play, genealogy does not limit itself to the slicing of a first space into Leleges territory, hitherto not defined: it binds that space together with one of the features constituting the very foundation of the Greek representation of civilisation – with ground corn, symbol of agricultural activity and, to put it more accurately, of cereal cultivation as opposed to hunting and pastoral activity.¹³ So there is no surprise in discovering in the space, where Myles lays the economic and material foundation of Spartan civilisation, a sanctuary to Lakedaimon, the ruler who will give his name to this land.

With Lelex's other children the Lelegian territory will undergo, from this central point marked by the civilisation of ground corn, some remarkable spatial extensions. First, in Messenia: there is no room for Polykaon, the second son, to take his place next to his brother, Lelex's successor. He retires into exile beyond Mt Taygetos and marries, in what is to be Messenia, the daughter of Triopas of Argos, Messene. To ensure the conquest of the land that bears her name and before she gives it a capital city, Andania, Messene calls to her aid the Argives and also the Spartans. It is therefore due to the intervention of a feminine figure that the civic definition and identity of the Messenian territory are established, while a male contingent from Argos puts a military seal on that conquest and men from Sparta ensure the political power sequence. The coincidence on the one hand with the feminine and masculine, and on the other, with the Argive ancestry and the Spartan sovereignty, will leave its mark. For Messene the Argive and Polykaon the Spartan will lay the foundations of a sanctuary to Zeus on Mt Ithome in the geographic centre of the Messenian territory.¹⁴ We must recall here that Triopas, like Lelex, is one of those characters who, related to numerous migratory moves, finds himself placed at the start of several royal genealogies, in particular in Thessaly where he is linked with the Lapiths, if not at Rhodes and in Caria where he follows the Leleges' route in reverse.¹⁵ Triopas has also an important part to play, even negatively, in establishing Demeter's cult. It is not excluded either that through his daughter he brought to Messenia the cereal cultivation values indispensable to this territory's economic development, territory coveted by the Spartans for its agricultural wealth.

But future Sparta, through the genealogical narrative, extends also from its agricultural centre as defined by the miller-king Myles towards the east: Therapne gets its name from that of Lelex's daughter.¹⁶ There is no reason to believe that it is by chance that the legend conjures up at the genealogical beginning of Sparta the probable place of residence and the actual place of the cult of the 'Mycenaean' sovereigns, Menelaos and Helen, and that of the Dioskouroi, Helen's twin brothers. This does not mean that the genealogical narrative, which we shall date to the start of the classical period, keeps intact

the memory of events going back to the thirteenth century BC; but at Sparta, as in so many other Greek cities, it is a Mycenaean site which, as early as the archaic period, will serve as a setting for the cult devoted to the protagonists turned heroes of the Trojan War. Archaeological discoveries reveal that if the site of Sparta itself was probably not occupied before the protogeometric era (from the tenth century BC), on the other hand Therapne is with Amyklai the richest Mycenaean site in that region.¹⁷ This non-occupation of Sparta proves the vacuity of any use of genealogy as a document for its early history. On the other hand, a genealogical representation dating from the classical period could not fail to site a place so important in cult and legend at that time in relation to the centre. This is a point we shall make more than once: the genealogical narrative retells history in the perspective of the political situation in Sparta at the start of the fifth century BC.

2.3 Eurotas: Extension of the Cultivated Space

Let us now return to the centre and to the direct agnatic descent from Myles, initiator of Spartan cereal cultivation. It is Myles' son, Eurotas, who succeeds his father.¹⁸ Genealogical tradition ascribes to this third king of Sparta the clearing and draining of the Laconian plains and the canal dug to let the then stagnant waters flow towards the sea. It became the river bearing his name. A late text adds that the clearing of the land that became the valley of the Eurotas took place after the Flood, that is to say, according to the Spartan chronology, before the intervention of Lelex, himself linked with the time of the Flood.¹⁹ If this relative dating of a civilised intervention is chronologically speaking not absolutely consistent, it nevertheless harmonises with the series of cultural actions of the first rulers of legendary Greece. In any case, this cleansing by Eurotas represents a second extension of Laconian space and simultaneously an expansion of civilisation: not only Alesiai but the whole plain of the Eurotas is given over to agriculture. From then on the Eurotas is a river of civilisation.²⁰

And doubtless it is not mere coincidence that the Spartans later associated in a single sanctuary to Hera the commemoration of Eurotas overflowing onto the arable soil and that of the sacrifice offered to Aphrodite-Hera by mothers who saw their daughters join in the state of matrimony. It is well known that in Greece in the representation of civilisation, cereal cultivation is used in particular as a metaphor for marriage: Eurotas, domesticated, ensures the productivity of the entire plain it has created; the mother who bends her daughter under the matrimonial yoke guarantees the continuity of the Spartan families.²¹

2.4 Lakedaimon and Sparte: the Political Centre

Eurotas, however, in another respect confronts us with a blockage in the

process of the agnatic legitimacy, since he has no male issue.²² So he gives his daughter Sparte in marriage to one of the other great hero-founders of Laconia, Lakedaimon, the son of Zeus and of the nymph Taygete. Whatever the reason for substituting a uterine lineage for the agnatic lineage, it tallies with a basic reorganisation of Laconian space: first, by defining a political centre and including this centre in a well-demarcated territory. This inclusion is figuratively represented as an enclosure of the female by the male: Sparta is 'embraced' by Lakedaimon.

The son of Zeus and Taygete actually starts by giving the land and its inhabitants his own name; then he lays the foundation of a city and gives it his wife's name. Lakedaimon's country, Lakedaimonia, now possesses its capital city, founded by a man and not a woman, as was the case for Andania in Messenia. In this toponymic definition, genealogy, though capable of reconstructing a story, is also trying to rationalise a linguistic usage already somewhat fluctuating. Although for the ancients as for the moderns Sparta designates hardly anything else but the city of this name, Lakedaimon refers to the city and also to the region of which it is the capital, thus covering the sense given to the geographical term Laconia. Whilst giving coherence to the use of names, which had been normal since the time of Homer, the genealogical narrative at the same time removes their aboriginal name from the natives to endow them with a definite identity of a political order: the inhabitants of the Eurotas plain are no longer babbling Leleges, but Lakedaimonians, that is free men given the freedom of the city in the state of Lakedaimon. In antiquity, the name Lakedaimonians always and officially refers to a political entity and not to an ethnic one.²³ Through the founding acts of Lakedaimon's predecessors runs an *isotopia* of an agricultural order; those of Lakedaimon define a civic perspective. It is evident also that Lakedaimon's relationship with Zeus links his image with the civic state. Sparta's new king is therefore the son of the king of the gods, the keeper of the world-order.²⁴ This divine descent puts him on an equal footing with Zeus' other sons who are generally culture heroes and/or city founders: Minos, founder and king of Knossos; Arkas, eponymous hero of the Arcadians; Zethos and Amphion, builders of Thebes; Epaphos, maker of many cities; and several other names could be cited. More often than not these various heroes have for their mother a nymph seduced by a Zeus generally metamorphosed. Lakedaimon is therefore no exception. The privileged relationship that Sparta's founder enjoys with the king of the gods is moreover confirmed by the existence in Sparta of the royal cult performed in honour of Zeus Lakedaimon (Herodotos 6.56.1); the epiclesis tends to identify the son with the father. Lakedaimon is in any case king by divine right.

Lakedaimon is also master of spatial delimitations by means of names. Just as he honours his wife, who has transferred to him the political power of the Leleges, by naming the newly founded capital after her, so he honours his mother, Atlas' nymph-daughter that Zeus seduced, and gives her name to the highest mountain range in the land.²⁵ To the definition of Spartan territory

and its political centre, Sparta, is added the identification of a boundary, in fact the limit *par excellence*. The Taygetos range clearly divides Sparta from Messenia, its higher peaks reaching over 2,400 m. The fact that it coincides with a nymph's image does not permit Mt Taygetos simply to act as a topographical limit: it embodies also marginal values that the image of the mother does not represent so strongly in Greece as that of the nymph. The famous throne of Amyklai shows the young Taygete abducted by Zeus. Consequently the nymph, a maiden, is forced to submit to male violence, outside wedlock. The legend adds that the *parthenos* harassed by the god's attentions is granted the help of the virgin Artemis and changed into a doe. This metamorphosis places the nymph twice over under the jurisdiction of the goddess of the extra-civilised field: maiden and doe, she ends up by becoming its incarnation in a mountainous and wild country. Pindar already had cited the doe with the golden antlers consecrated by Taygete to Orthosia, Sparta's Artemis.²⁶ Lakedaimon's wife, through her name and the legitimacy of the royal power she hands down, had inscribed the space defined by the new king of Sparta in the political field; his mother, on the other hand, all round this civilised territory, stands for the liminal field of the wild.

One must take note that other versions of the legend of Eurotas ascribe other daughters than Sparte to the river-king. The most significant version goes back, if not to Pindar, certainly to Sosibios, a Laconian historian of the Hellenistic period; here Eurotas is not Sparte's father, but Pitane's: this gives its origin to one of the *obai*, the districts of classical Sparta. This is another way of inscribing into Eurotas' issue Laconia's political centre while it adds perhaps to the Spartan genealogical narrative a look in the direction of Arcadia and Elis. Evadne, the daughter born to Pitane through her union with Poseidon, will become the mother of Iamos who, after having been fed on honey by the snakes of the Alpheios will found the oracle of the Iamids at Olympia. A parallel version gives to Eurotas a daughter named Mekionike; from her union, also with Poseidon, she will start the line of descendants who will become the founders and colonisers of Thera and Kyrene, Laconian sites in origin.²⁷ So it is here that the space of the process of the Spartan colonisation is staked out and inscribed in genealogy. A separate study could be devoted to this new direction followed by the genealogical narrative.

2.5 Amyklai: Enlargement of the Political Territory and of its Centre

As a result of the brief matrilinear interruption in an otherwise entirely patrilinear genealogy presented by the union of Lakedaimon and Sparte, sole heiress of Eurotas' power, Laconia's political centre and the divine origin of the royal power has been defined; and in addition boundaries have been set *vis-à-vis* the wild, the domain of Artemis. Amyklas' accession to the throne, as a son of Lakedaimon and Sparte, signifies the return to an agnatic lineage. This

return coincides with a complementary definition of the political centre. For Amyklas is founder of a town that will take his name. As with Therapne, we learn from archaeology that Amyklai was an important site during the Mycenaean period, and at the beginning of the archaic period became the most important of the city's cult places. In the course of the eighth century BC it was added to the four *obai* constituting the city of Sparta, being integrated in this way with the political centre.²⁸ So if it is with Therapne, Lelex's daughter, that the place of worship dedicated to 'Homeric' heroes enters into the space defined by the genealogical narrative, it is with Amyklas, the son of Lakedaimon and Sparte, that the inclusion of the Mycenaean site is brought about both on the political level and that of heroic cult. The political aspect of this narrative is shown in the foundation of a town; the cultic aspect is embodied in the figure of one of Amyklas' sons, Hyakinthos, the athlete ephebe killed inadvertently by his lover Apollo. Both were honoured when one of the greatest festivals of ancient Sparta took place: included in the celebration of the final phase of the initiation that Spartan youths, boys and girls, underwent, the Hyakinthia was a festival that gathered together at Amyklai every social group forming the political community.²⁹

Before we come to the next generation, we should not pass over Eurydike, daughter of Lakedaimon and Sparte. Her exogamic marriage to Akrisios, king of Argos, extends Spartan space in the direction of the Argolid. More precisely, this union makes Spartan genealogy coincide with its Argive equivalent. For Akrisios like Proitos is a grandson to Lynkeus, himself a nephew of Danaos, the famous culture hero of the Danaoi of the Argolid who succeeded to the kingdom of the descendants of Argos, founder of the city of that name. The union of the Argive Akrisios with the Spartan Eurydike brought about the birth of Danae, mother of Perseus, the famous slayer of the Gorgo.³⁰

The evidence given on the extent of Spartan territorial and political claims by the genealogy's marriage alliance with one of the first kings of Argos receives striking confirmation in Sparta on both the spatial and cultic levels. For in the centre of the city there was a temple dedicated to the protectress divinity of Argos, Hera Argeia – a temple erected by no other than Eurydike, daughter of Lakedaimon.³¹ But the marriage relationship that represents and lays down the Spartan claims on Argive space has a very different character from the Messenian case. From the Spartan perspective, the marriage of Polykaon and Messene was uxorilocal but patrilinear; that of Eurydike and Akrisios is virilocal but matrilinear. We shall see that this inversion reflects a precise political and historical situation in the relationship of Sparta with its neighbours and in the territorial organisation of the whole Peloponnese.

2.6 The Sons of Amyklas: Confirmation of the Centre and Opening towards the Exterior

The legendary founder of Amyklai obviously does not remain celibate: he

marries Diomede, who through her father Lapithes, founder of the *genos* of the Lapiths, links the house of the Spartan kings with the Thessalian genealogy.³² She provides Amyklas with a good number of male descendants, but the quantity seems to have as a corollary a relative feebleness of characterisation. Hyakinthos is certainly the most original of Amyklas' and Diomede's three sons; it is with him that Amyklai's inclusion on the cultic level is achieved. But Hyakinthos is not Amyklas' eldest son: at his death he is succeeded by Argalos, also known as Harpalos, who even if he dies young has a son from whom Agenor, then Patreus, eponymous hero and founder of Patras in Achaia, will be descended. From now on the kings of Spartan origin that the genealogy establishes in the land of the Achaians extend over practically the whole of the Peloponnese the clanic representation of the Spartans' spatial pretensions.³³ Sparta's official genealogy, however, seems rapidly to forget about Argalos, substituting on the Lacedaemonian throne Amyklas' second son, Kynortas. All one knows of this equally ephemeral king is the tomb the Spartans built for him, which in Pausanias' time still stood in the centre of the city next to the funeral monument of Castor the Tyndarid. Nevertheless it is to be noticed that both Argalos' and Kynortas' names can be connected with the various names given to the *obai*, the 'villages' that formed the city of Sparta.³⁴ As their father did before them, Amyklas' sons seem to have become eponymous heroes of the spatial and political constituents of the centre.

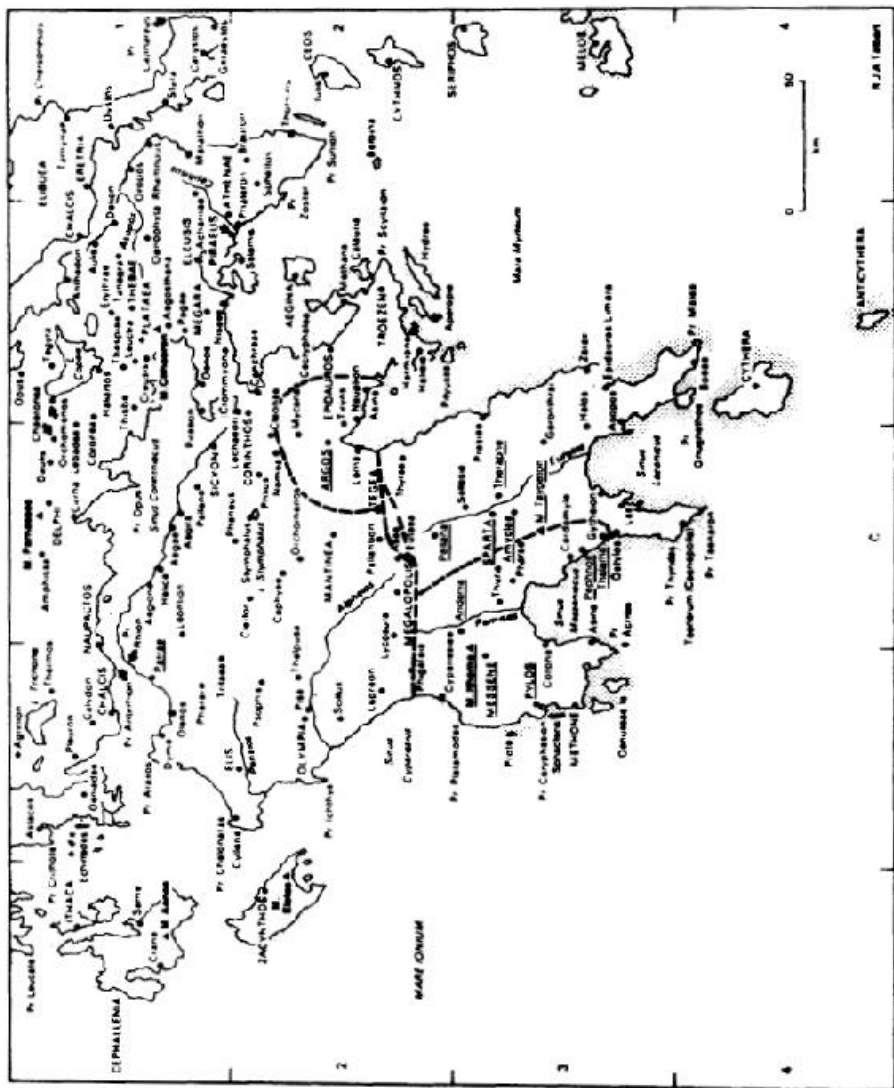
2.7 Oibalos: Reassertion of the Argos–Sparta–Messenia Triangle

With Kynortas' descendants, the genealogy, after representing the development and semantic definition of a territory by means of the hitherto concluded unions, is in a way going to 'dynamise' this first construction. This 'dynamisation' inside the space so far defined begins with the marriage of Kynortas' son Oibalos with Perseus' daughter Gorgophone, i.e. the marriage of the king of Sparta with his cross-related grand-daughter! The striking fact in this marriage is not so much the union with a collateral relation than, within the context of the *rapprochement* of Sparta with Argos, the union with a woman who has been married before and had children from her first marriage. For, according to Pausanias (2.21.7), Gorgophone's marriage was to Perieres, the son of Aiolos. And she would become the first woman to have been married twice.

The spatial consequences of this double union are truly significant. According to legend, the line of the first Messenian king, Polykaon, was extinct after the fifth generation. And it is actually the Thessalian Perieres who will be asked to take the throne of Messenia. After its first foundation – as will be recalled – by the Argive Messene with the help of her Spartan and Lelegian husband Polykaon, Messenia undergoes a second act of foundation through the intervention of the Thessalian Perieres who takes as his first wife Gorgophone,

also an Argive. It is beyond question that this taking of power constitutes a new act of foundation, for it is evidenced as much by the character of Perieres' father Aiolos as by that of his sons. For Aiolos is not merely the Aeolians' ancestor as founder of a people – a function guaranteed by his forbears Deukalion and Hellen (the hero that left his name to the Hellenes or Greeks) – but he is also the father of seven sons, each of whom becomes the founder of a city or state: Orchomenos, Corinth, Iolkos, Phocis, Elis, Magnesia and finally, with Perieres, Messenia. The tradition portraying Aiolos' and his sons' acts of foundation is in any case ancient: traces are found in Boiotia in the texts of Hesiod as in Sparta itself in a fragment of Aleman.³⁵ The installation of the Thessalian Perieres on the throne of Messenia and his union with Perseus' Argive daughter result in the decisive removal (by an act of foundation) of the land of Messenia from Spartan power. It will be seen that Gorgophone's second marriage, to the Spartan Oibalos, will prepare indirectly at first, by way of cross-cousins, a new *rapprochement* between the two countries and at the same time the polemical relationship destined to set them at odds.

Figure 8.2 The Peloponnese and Central Greece



It should, however, be stated that another version of the legend that goes back to Stesichoros (fr. 227; Apollodoros 3.10.3), turns Perieres into a Spartan, substituting him for Oibalos as son of Kynortas. This attempt to manipulate the legend to bring Messenia back under the genealogical jurisdiction of Sparta, repeating Polykaon's act of foundation, is nevertheless doomed to remain ineffective. For, as we shall see later, attributing Oibalos' sons on the one hand and Perieres' on the other to the same father will do nothing to hinder their mutual confrontation. So for the time being, let us leave the Argos-Sparta-Messenia triangle being broken up through the intervention of Aeolian exteriority.

Returning now to the first version of the legend, there are a few signs that allow us to see in the figure of Oibalos a founder like his Messenian

counterpart Perieres. The Spartans had built a heroon, to Amyklas' grandson, linked by its topographical position with the sanctuary of Poseidon Genethlios, the guardian of the *gene*, the clans constituting the first Spartan citizens. Further, since Hesiod, Tyndareus, the most famous of all Oibalos' sons, has the patronym *Oibalides*; this name will be taken up again, in the plural, by an inscription on Thera to designate the ancient aristocratic families of Sparta who claimed through this onomastic expedient descent from Oibalos.³⁶ So here we have, opposing each other, Perieres, second (Aeolian) founder of Messenia, and Oibalos, who begins a new dynasty after the political and religious recentring of Sparta, notably embodied in the figure of Amyklas.

2.8 The Children of Gorgophone: Deviances and Polemics

2.8.1. The Messenian Branch. Perieres has two sons. The eldest, Aphareus, promptly gives Messenia a new capital. The former capital, Andania, where Perieres still lives, will continue to be the place of one of the most important Greek mystery cults after Eleusis. On the other hand, he marries none other than Arene, daughter of Oibalos. He gives the town he has just founded the name of his young wife, just as Polykaon named Messenia after his wife Messene.³⁷ Thus Messenia's bonds with Sparta are newly tied through a woman and no longer through a man, as was the case in the second generation with Polykaon. Moreover, where Gorgophone was the first woman to marry twice, Arene and Aphareus have the same mother: so their union represents a second violation of the norm of unique, exogamic marriage.

Furthermore, Aphareus receives at Arene in Messenia his second-cousin Neleus, like him a grandson of Aiolos. He then proceeds to divide his kingdom and gives his parallel second-cousin, expelled from Iolkos by his twin brother Pelias, the western, maritime part of Messenia, of which Pylos becomes the capital. Another version of the legend makes Pylos a foundation independent from Messenia, due to the Leleges that came from the Megarid; it is then later conquered by Neleus and not made over by the Messenian king. But the point is nevertheless that one must see written in the genealogy a most important partition of the Messenian territory and the definition of a coastal region which, once abandoned, will never be economically as important for the Spartans as the central plain.³⁸

One can add to this territorial division, asserting a second time the Aeolian, not Spartan, connections of Messenia, the welcome that Aphareus gives to the figure representing Neleus' Athenian counterpart, Lykos, the son of Pandion, expelled from Athens by his brother Aigeus. Lykos will be concerned with reactivating the mysteries of Andania on the pattern of those of Eleusis.³⁹ The territory of Messenia, after a Spartan attempt at control, again looks northwards, in the direction of Thessaly and Attica.

2.8.2 The Spartan Branch. On the Spartan side, one can witness the same

contradictory concomitance of the work of refounding the city with abnormal and polemical relationships between the representatives of political power. Gorgophone gives Oibalos three sons who will be in conflict the moment the problem of their father's succession arises. Tyndareus, the rightful heir *qua* eldest, takes power, but Hippokoon, on the pretext that he himself is the eldest, forms an alliance with Ikarios, the youngest son, to contest the legitimacy of Tyndareus' power. The latter sees himself forced to surrender the throne to his brothers. He takes refuge at Pellana not far from the source of the Eurotas, or, according to a different version, in Messenia with his half-brother Perieres, or again with King Thestios at Pleuron in Aitolia. The scholiast on Euripides' *Orestes* sums up best the spatial aspect of these various versions and shows that Tyndareus' refuge corresponds to the *eschata*, the most remote parts of Sparta. This is confirmed by Plutarch when he states that the frontier of the land of Sparta was not far from Pellana. One notes incidentally that the various versions of this famous legend of Tyndareus' exile have seen to it that the illegitimacy of his brother Hippokoon's action is based on his having a different mother than Gorgophone and being consequently a bastard.⁴⁰

2.9 The Tyndarids: Centripetal Polemics

The recovery of power starting from the boundaries of Spartan territory involves the confrontation of Tyndareus' sons with those of Hippokoon. This narrative sequence in the genealogy compels us to anticipate in order to examine the generation following that of Tyndareus, an anticipation all the more necessary since tradition not only gives Hippokoon twelve, even twenty sons, but adds to Tyndareus' sons the prestigious Dioskouroi, receivers of cultic honour *par excellence* as the divine incarnation of the *neos*, the young athlete who after his initiation gains the status of soldier-citizen.⁴¹ Our analysis will be centred on the genealogical aspect of the many qualities attributed to the Tyndarids and on the spatial representation that derives from it. Castor and Pollux are, then, the sons of Tyndareus and Leda, the daughter of Thestios the Aitolian with whom the Spartan king sought refuge after the *coup* of his brother Hippokoon. But the Dioskouroi are *Dios kouroi*, 'sons of Zeus', from the earliest tradition that shows these twin heroes in both their human and their divine ancestry.⁴² This double filiation is again, as with Lakedaimon, going to place the responsibility for the recapture of power on Zeus. The Dioskouroi will in fact be the agents by the support they give to their human father Tyndareus.

But this reassertion of the legitimate power in Sparta also takes on a spatial aspect since the intervention of the Dioskouroi begins from the boundaries of the Spartan territory where their father is exiled. When their paternity is attributed to Zeus, the Dioskouroi are born on Mt Taygetos. But when legend makes them Tyndareus' sons, they are born on Pephnos, a small island on the frontier between Messenia and Lakonia. From Pephnos, Hermes takes them to

that other frontier territory, Pellana. Finally, the genealogical text on which the present analysis is based locates the birth of the Dioskouroi at Thalamai, a Laconian village not far from Pephnos.⁴³

The various versions of the legend of Tyndareus' exile and the birth of the Dioskouroi impart a centrifugal movement we have not seen so far to the Spartan genealogical structure. But this movement from the centre towards the margins of the territory is meant – as we have said – better to prepare a new establishment of the centre. A sudden change in the semio-narrative structures underlying the genealogy narrative will correspond precisely to this first separation. Spartan genealogy has been presented so far as a cumulation of state-enunciates; in the form of matrimonial alliances, these enunciates have progressively defined the limits of Spartan territory as well as openings towards the exterior, marking out space in a way befitting good neighbours. Born from the interior, in the very centre of this space, the rivalry which suddenly opposes some of Oibalos' sons to others introduces a polemical relationship expressed narratively by the appearance of an anti-subject and also by an action ('Hippokoon banishes Tyndareus'). Spatially, the irruption of confrontation into the narrative is conveyed by the centrifugal movement described above.

2.9.1 The Battle against the Hippokoontids. The 'lack-situation' brought about by Tyndareus' unjust exile will be reversed by the intervention of his sons against those of Hippokoon: the narrative equilibrium, broken by the polemic relationship, must be regained. We cannot here go into all the details of an account that would take us far beyond Laconia's frontiers, but it must be mentioned that the legend sets all the weight of the restoration of the equilibrium on Herakles' shoulders. For it is to the famous culture hero, the son of Zeus and the Mycenaean Alkmene, that genealogy, transformed into narrative, ascribes Tyndareus' restoration to the throne of Sparta. This restoration of order and legitimacy in Sparta figures in a series of Herakles' interventions in various cities of the Peloponnese. The hero's fight beside the Tyndarids and their father to regain power usurped by Hippokoon and defended by his own sons is narratively motivated by the help the latter are bringing to Neleus. Neleus and his sons dared to stand against Herakles' intervention at Pylos, and in his battle against the Neleids the hero spares only Nestor, the future king of the city. Let us leave aside the probable reduplication, after his intervention at Pylos, of Herakles' fight at Sparta against the Hippokoontids and the other motivations that the legend mentions, in order to stress the fact that already in the seventh century BC Aleman had put the myth of Herakles' battle with the Hippokoontids in the mouth of one of the *choroi* of young girls for whom he composed the *Partheneia*, and had doubtless made the Hippokoontids rivals in love of the Dioskouroi. The problem of the succession to the throne of Sparta combines again with the question of marriage alliance. As in the previous stages of the genealogy, the

taking over of a political space is a matter of the implantation and integration of womanhood.⁴⁴

2.9.2 The Fight against the Apharetids. The polemical relationship is not solely set up in the interior; it becomes also the new mode for asserting power outside of the territory that the genealogy demarcates. The fight of Herakles and the Tyndarids against the Hippokoonids has taken us from the father's generation to that of the sons, even if the outcome restores the power of the father, Tyndareus. After Hippokoon's sons, it is the sons of Aphareus, king of Messenia, whom, according to legend, the Dioskouroi must meet next, though the episode admittedly is not integrated in the genealogical text. Besides Aphareus, Perieres has a second son called Leukippos. Aphareus, through his union with Arene, daughter of Oibalos, has two sons, Idas and Lynkeus. Leukippos has two daughters, Hilaeira and Phoibe, better known as the Leukippidai. Leukippos' daughters, while still virgins, will soon find themselves at the centre of the rivalry in love which opposes Castor and Pollux, sons of the Spartan Tyndareus (their cross-related cousins) and Idas and Lynkeus, sons of the Messenian Aphareus (their parallel cousins).

The legend, which goes back to the *Kypria* and is alluded to by Pindar, has several versions. In spite of their inevitable variations, each is centred on an infringement of social rules: an attempt at endogamic union (the Apharetids are about to marry their parallel cousins, the Leukippidai); subversion of the rules of hospitality (Aphareus' sons, guests of the Tyndarids, make a mockery of their hosts); abduction, disregarding the rules of offering a gift in compensation (according to the Apharetids, the Tyndarids abduct the Leukippidai without giving a dowry to the maidens' father); plundering on the economic level (the Dioskouroi seize the ploughoxen of the Apharetids); contravention of the rules of combat for hoplites (Aphareus' sons attack Pollux by throwing a stone from their own father's tomb at him); forsaking the dying (the Apharetids die alone, says Pindar). But for the articulation of the plot, one always finds at the centre of the legend the matrimonial union of the Leukippidai with the Dioskouroi, the sons of Tyndareus.⁴⁵

It is once more through the device of marriage alliance that the political control of Sparta over Messenia is represented. With the marriage of Leukippos' daughters with Tyndareus' sons and the physical disappearance of their Messenian suitors, legend denies to Perieres' family any male issue and consequently any claim to the throne of Messenia. Once again, as on the occasion of Perieres' accession, the throne of Messenia is left without a legitimate heir. But here the gap in the legitimate line of descent of Messenia occurs through acts of war, or rather by means of a series of violent and deviant actions bearing the character, in the Greek representation of age-classes, of the activity of the neo-initiate about to become a citizen-soldier. Reversing the rules of adult behaviour, as the Greeks do in their imagery of adolescence, these actions go as far as to assimilate Aphareus' sons to savage

monsters sharing the primeval and violent nature of the Titans. The narrative consequence is that Sparta no longer controls Messenia through the means of matrimonial unions: Messenia submits completely through an agonal battle that takes on the deviant aspects of primordality. Some support for this can be found in the fact that when presently the Herakleidai intervene in the Peloponnese, Nestor at Pylos is the sole representative of Messenia.

2.9.3 Helen and her Inheritance. The re-institutionalisation of Spartan power is begun by Tyndareus in the ‘dynamisation’ of relationships between the protagonists of the genealogy and continues with a narrative in a polemical key. That this is a matter of a stage in the reassertion of royal power is proved by the double intervention of Zeus, who was already present in the first definition of Laconia’s political centre by Lakedaimon. Zeus, divine father of the Dioskouroi, steps in at Pollux’s side to strike Idas with a thunderbolt as once he struck his rivals the Titans with lightning in the Titanomachia.⁴⁶ Zeus again is divine father to Helen, heiress to the throne of Sparta after her brother’s disappearance. Castor, the mortal, is killed in the fight against the Apharetids; Pollux, Zeus’ protégé, is made immortal by his divine father. Old Tyndareus then summons Menelaos, Helen’s husband, to succeed him on the Spartan throne.⁴⁷ In spite of the legend’s variations concerning a succession troubled particularly by the Trojan war, it is in fact Menelaos and Helen who are ruling over Laconia when Telemachos, in his search for his father, stays at the court of Sparta. So there has been a real matrimonial exchange between the rulers of the Argolid and those of Sparta: Klytemnestra, Tyndareus’ elder daughter, is married to Agamemnon who rules over Argos and Mycenae; and Menelaos, his younger brother, marries Klytemnestra’s sister, thus inheriting Sparta’s monarchic power and becoming Tyndareus’ successor. The marriage of Menelaos with Helen is therefore uxorilocal and, as with Sparte, it is by matrilinearity that power is transmitted by Tyndareus’ successor; but Sparta’s new king is no longer a Laconian like Lakedaimon, Taygete’s son.⁴⁸ For the first time in the genealogy, autochthonous lineage seems to lose its grip on power.

2.10 Hermione and Orestes: the Death Knell of Endogamy

The conjugal exchange between Sparta and Argos takes a second form in the following generation when Hermione, the only daughter of Menelaos, is married to Orestes, the son of Agamemnon and Klytemnestra.⁴⁹ In this way Orestes becomes heir to the Argive power as well as the Spartan; but this concentration, coinciding with an alliance between doubly parallel cousins, is by definition doomed to failure. From the Spartan standpoint, this doubly endogamic alliance puts an end to any patrilinear and virilocal legitimacy centred on Sparta. Legend in any case has Orestes die not in Sparta, but in Arcadia!

2.11 *The Herakleidai: Definitive Establishment of Power at Sparta*

Unlike the second institutional operation of the genealogy that resulted in asserting through Sparte and Lakedaimon's marriage the political aspect of a spatial centre, the third of these operations, a narrative development of polemics and of the semantic figure of warfare, is fundamentally negative as regards Sparta. Even Helen, heiress to the throne after her brothers' disappearance, flees to Troy. Moreover, the transmission of power by means of matri-linear and uxori-local succession does not create any recentring of power as was the case with Sparta. It is not surprising therefore that Teisanrenos, the only son of the cousins Hermione and Orestes, fails to restore the situation. His deviant heredity has no other result than to prepare the return of the Herakleidai and their installation on the Spartan throne and on that of other regions of the Peloponnese that he later held.⁵⁰ The result of this warlike intervention is a new partition of the Peloponnese, a repeat of the Spartan genealogy's original division, and the installation of definitive dynasties: to Temenos, the Argolid; to Kresphontes, Messenia; and Laconia goes to the two sons of the third brother, Aristodemos. Eurysthenes and Prokles thus become the initiators of the Spartan double kingship of Agiads and Eurypontids.⁵¹

Legend seems immediately to write Sparta's supremacy into the narrative of the intervention of the Herakleidai: it is only by guile that Kresphontes manages to get Messenia; the legitimacy of his power is thus immediately questioned. On the other hand, Herodotos himself tells us that according to the Spartans the twins who began their double royal dynasty were born to Aristodemos by a woman named Argia. Through this conjugal device, the Heraklid dynasty, as Herodotos adds, not only goes back to Herakles, but can also claim descent on the Argive side from Perseus and his grandfather Akrisios.⁵² So the establishment of Heraklid power in the Peloponnese marks a new beginning whilst taking up and reasserting the spatial schema that was built in the first stages of the genealogy.

3. Birth of a Genealogy: the Historical Context

If the genealogical narrative is looked at as a reasoned representation of a space, it poses a number of questions of an historical type to anyone who examines it. I stated earlier that I prefer to leave to others the thorny problem of an eventual relationship between the actions and actors of the genealogy and hypothetical historical events enacted by real protagonists. Without denying the possibility of relationships of this type, it must be recognised that archaeology at least shows that Sparta did not physically exist at the time when, about the fifteenth century BC, a relative chronology would place the intervention of Lelex and his descendants. As for Therapne and Amyklai,

Mycenaean sites very active in the thirteenth century BC, we saw that in the course of the eighth century the institution of heroic cults gave them a new function, marginal in relation to the civic role Sparta began to assume, but essential for the founding ideology of the archaic city and the ritual observances that gave it physical expression.⁵³ The gap between the scenario of the genealogical narrative and any kind of historic 'reality', however, can only discourage an attempt to see in the first a reflection of the second.

On the other hand, one is justified in asking if the legend as representation, in particular as ideological representation, is not a 'narrativisation' of a precise state of the territory's political divisions in a given historical situation. This situation would then coincide with the moment when the genealogy was formed and its elements would refer to the situation of the enunciation. Yet to inquire about the conditions of the enunciation and about the dating of the narrative comes down first to posing the rather complex problem of the sources of Pausanias and in particular his third book, devoted to Laconia.⁵⁴ If there is no possibility of determining the exact source of the genealogy opening Book 3, there are nevertheless some scattered indications drawing our attention towards sixth-century epic poets, in particular Kinaithon of Sparta, author of epic genealogies quoted by Pausanias for the descendants of Orestes, and Asios of Samos, cited in connection with Leda's ancestry.⁵⁵ One can add to these indications allusions to some of the genealogy's protagonists in fragments of Spartan poets of the end of the seventh century: Tyrtaios, who praises Zeus' gift of Sparta to the Herakleidai, and of course Aleman, relating the legend of the combat of the Dioskouroi with the sons of Hippokoon and probably also with the Apharetids.⁵⁶ But it is clearly impossible to recover and reconstruct from the mosaic of isolated fragments the linear development of the genealogy whose framework Pausanias gives us.

The last resort – to be handled with care lest one falls into the trap of an hermeneutic circle – is the correspondences between the definitive spatial image presented by the genealogy and the historical point when the territory is similarly divided. In the genealogical narrative, then, asserted at the time of each re-institutionalisation and confirmed by the division of the Peloponnese amongst the Herakleidai, one finds the Argos–Sparta–Messenia triangle, with Sparta as apex. This image can only have taken shape after the final submission of Messenia during the seventh century and loses all reality after its liberation in 370. At the same time, it is an image that also very likely takes into account two fundamental political events: the Spartans' appropriation of Orestes when the hero's bones are brought back from Arcadia to Sparta in the middle of the sixth century, and the neutralisation of the Argolid after the successive incursions of the Spartans in the Thyreatid (544) and at Sepeia in 495/4.⁵⁷ Sparta's policy of expansion towards the Argolid, which takes the ideological form of the annexation of the Achaean genealogy to write it into the aboriginal genealogy, has left several traces, in particular in Herodotos' works. Even well into the fifth century, the historian echoes the Spartan attempts since the mid-

sixth century to achieve hegemony over the Peloponnese, and their efforts at justification through the alleged Achaean ancestry of their rulers.⁵⁸ One may therefore entertain the idea that the genealogical narrative we have analysed found its canonical form and consequently its enunciative setting during the period of the consolidation of the Spartan hegemony over the main part of the Peloponnese, during the second half of the sixth century and the first quarter of the fifth.

4. The Genealogical Narrative as a Symbolic Process

The ideological function of the Spartan genealogy is to represent, within precise historical conditions of the expansion of the city, not only a space with its given political limits and social values, but also the manner in which the spatial situation was gradually brought about. This has been stated repeatedly. But why use the form of genealogy?

First, probably, because, through the narrative process of cumulation instead of confrontation, it allows a linear (diachronic) development to lead into a static (synchronic) representation. So if Spartan genealogy does assume correctly the ideological function assigned to it, one may ask for example if it does not bear the imprint of the ideology of the three Indo-European functions. Answers to this question have been attempted not unsuccessfully in relation to the Spartan double kingship (reduplication of the first function) and, rather less successfully, regarding the tripartition of the Peloponnese between the Herakleidai.⁵⁹ Since the intervention of Herakles' descendants represents the outcome of the genealogy, why should its development up to this new starting point not bear equally the imprint of the ideology of these three functions?

Such is certainly the case within the genealogy for the act constitutive of the space of Messenia: the mark of political and religious power is seen in the institution, by the first rulers of Messenia, Messene and Polykaon, of the cult of Zeus; the warrior function enters with the support of Argive and Spartan soldiers in the occupation of the territory of the future Messenia; the activity of agricultural production is alluded to in the conflict between Demeter and Triopas, Messene's father.

But it is probably also the case with the process of the constitution of Sparta and Laconia as developed by the genealogical narrative overall. The three-functional ideology can be seen in a division of the ten royal generations preceding the Herakleidai into three groups following each other in the narrative temporality of the genealogy. From Lelex to Eurotas via Myles, the *isotopia* which runs through these rulers' founding acts articulates above all the values attached to the earth and to cereal cultivation: the narrative begins, then, by actualising the function of production. Starting with Sparte and her husband Lakedaimon, son of Zeus, continuing with Amyklas, the founder of

Amyklai, and then his son Hyakinthos at the start of the Amyklaian festival in honour of Apollo, it is obvious that the political and religious function is taking shape. Next, Oibalos assumes a position of intermediary between norm and deviance, between a narrative that is static and one that is truly polemical, and also intermediary between affirming the initial spatial triangle and challenging it. This failed re-institutionalisation is the act of the three following generations (Tyndareus, Dioskouroi and Helen, Orestes), and the agonal fights in which they are the protagonists clearly actualise the military function. Thus, thanks to the genealogical form, diachrony and synchrony come to coincide in a probable manifestation of the Indo-European ideology of the three functions.

But beyond the Indo-European imprint and the coincidence between static or on the contrary linear and genetic structure, the genealogy allows one above all to give shape to the transition from a degree zero to a state of differentiation. It is then able to take provisionally the turn of traditional narrative which always presupposes duality in the opposition in action of subject and anti-subject or, if one admits the existence of the level of fundamental syntax and semantics, the relationships of contrariety and contradiction that the semiotic square of Greimas' theory articulates.⁶⁰ Seen from this perspective the development of the Spartan genealogy is entirely significant, especially in its spatial manifestation. In the first two stages of its development (territorial demarcation assuring Sparta's economic foundations, determination of the political centre and boundaries of its territory), the text makes full use of the narrative possibilities specific to genealogy with the attribution of original characteristics which every new birth and every matrimonial conjunction establishes by means of state-enunciates. The territory constituted in the genealogy thus grows spatially as well as qualitatively, without essential reversals, through the form of the various actors that every new state-enunciate sets up.

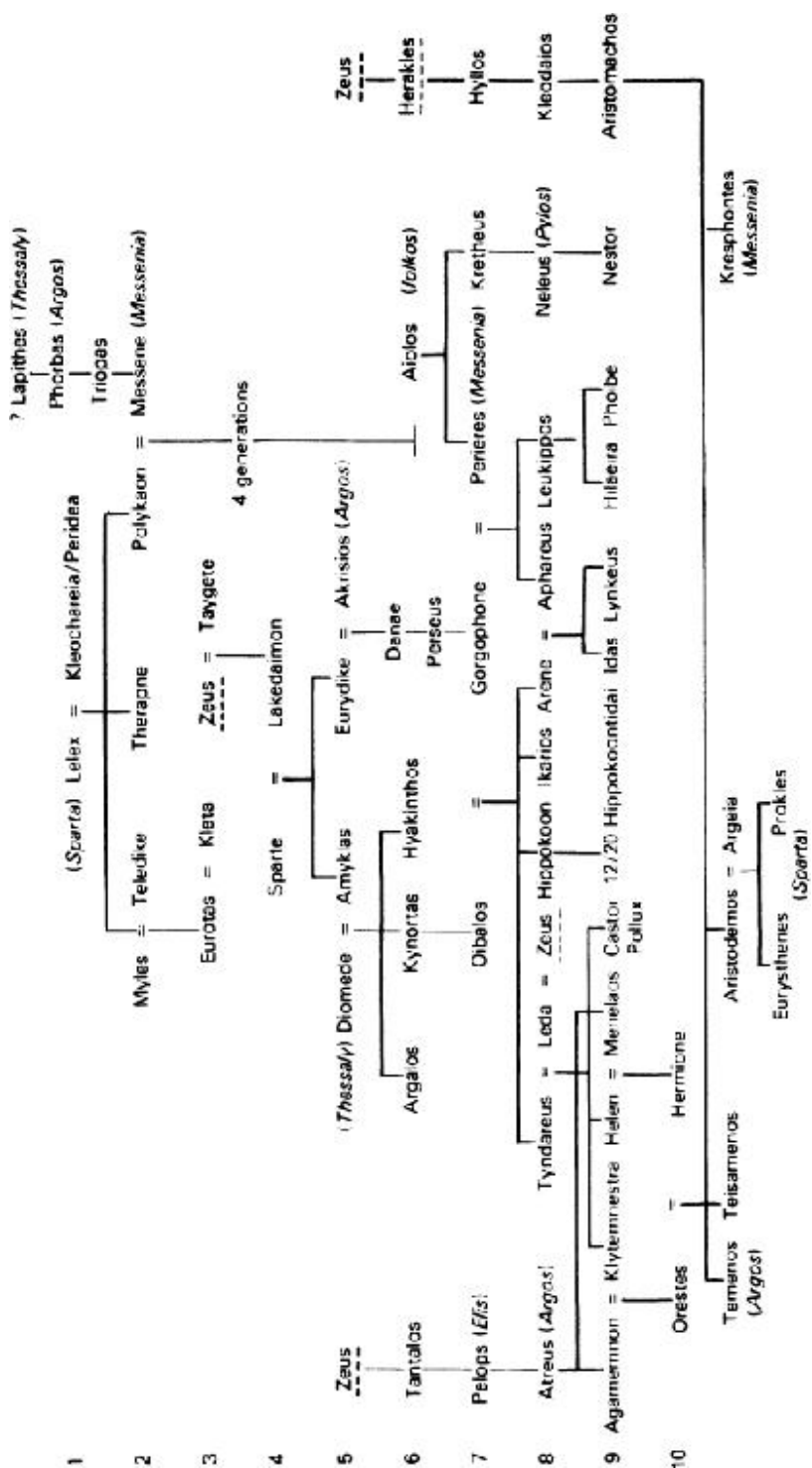
In the end, everything happens as though the constant actor who in traditional narrative assures the unity of the narration had been replaced by space, since it is territorial unity that assures the narrative coherence of the genealogy over the succession of its actors. Moreover, the generation of the territory and its representatives originating in a unique autochthonous ancestor enables the narrative in a way to put the genealogy into perspective and to establish Sparta definitively as the centre of focus. Lelex's position thus refers to the situation of the enunciator of the genealogy.⁶¹ But no sooner is the centre defined with its territory and boundaries within the Argos-Sparta-Messenia triangle than confrontation arises. Then, from the double marriage of the Argive Gorgophone, the tensions between the three poles come to light; through the expedient of simple conjugal unions covering the state-enunciates actualised up to this stage, genealogy becomes 'narrativised' and is the site of a polemical action. There seems to be no other way of re-establishing the narrative equilibrium than through the marriage of Hermione and Orestes,

with the unique power instituted by this union on the confronting parties; but this is only how it appears, since the alliance in fact bears in its doubly endogamic character the very reasons of its inanity. Hence the return of the Herakleidai and the reaffirmation of the spatial configuration to which the first two stages of the genealogical process had already led.

So the royal genealogy constitutes a real principle of explanation and of figurative manifestation for the transition from the one to the multiple and to the differentiated. Yet generation also passes through matrimonial union and it is due to conjugal union that womanhood becomes integrated into the political centre. This womanhood is in general a representation of exteriority, whether defined in relation to the adult man's civilisation (Lelex's wife is a nymph or a naiad; Taygete, Lakedaimon's mother, is a virgin and a nymph); or whether she signifies otherness in relation to political territory (Messene is Argive, as is Gorgophone, Oibalos' wife; Diomede, Amyklas' wife, is Thessalian; Leda, Tyndareus' wife is Aitolian). Womanhood fixes its roots not so much in the non-civilised as in the exterior, in the Other. But because of these roots and because of conjugal union, the passage from the exterior to the interior takes place within womanhood. The marginality often attributed to the Greek image of woman has, then, a conditional value;⁶² her presence is only acknowledged as a means for the political adult identity to take shape. Zeus' illegal and savage union with the maiden Taygete is transformed in the succeeding generation into the eminently political marriage of their son Lakedaimon with Sparte, thus rushing to the rescue of the Spartan patrilinear legitimacy in dire need of a male heir.

Furthermore, the conjugal union, sign of the wedded couple's passage to adult social status, corresponds narratively to the sanction of a condition. In the narrative within which it acts as narrative operator, it is then capable of representing the establishment of an order. Lastly, the process of begetting and of the succession of generations shares with the narration a certain image of the linearity of temporal developments, with this peculiarity, that for once it is space that finds temporal representation, and not the other way round. Was it not after all precisely the genetic pattern which served the nineteenth century as a basis and image for every explanation with a claim to being 'scientific'?

Figure 8.3 The Genealogy of the First Kings of Sparta



Here, then, is something that throws back into question too neat a

distinction between ‘rational’ thought and ‘symbolic’ thought, not to mention the supposedly arbitrary operation of the latter!⁶³

Notes

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1. Hes. *Theog.* 116ff; Hecat. *FGrH* 1 F 3ff; Eumel. *FGrH* 451 T 1, F 1ff; *Marm. Par. FGrH* 239 (cf. Dem. Phal. *FGrH* 228 F 1). On theogonic and (historical) genealogies see now, respectively, M. L. West, *Hesiod. Theogony* (Oxford, 1966) 1–16 and F. Jacoby, *Atthis* (Oxford, 1949) 134–40, 219–23. On the genealogical genre in general see F. Graf, *Griechische Mythologie* (Munich and Zurich, 1985) 117–37 and M. L. West, *The Hesiodic Catalogue of Women* (Oxford, 1985) 11–18.

2. Tyrt. fr. 2.12–15 West = la. 12–15 Gentili/Prato; see also below, note 56. Hippas’ lectures: Plato *Hi. Ma.* 285de, with the commentary by Detienne, *Invention*, 163–7.

3. Paus. 3.1.1–5, tr. W. H. S. Jones and H. A. Ormerod (Loeb), spelling adapted.

4. Cf. M. Stanek, *Sozialordnung und Mythik in Palimbei = Basler Beitr. z. Ethnol.*, 23 (Basle, 1983) 174–82.

5. See Calame, ‘Le Nom d’Oedipe’, in *Edipo, il teatro greco e la cultura europea* (Rome, 1986) 395–407; idem, *Le récit en Grèce ancienne* (Paris, 1986) 153–61, 215–17.

6. Cf. Hom. *Il.* XX.92–6, XXI.86f.; Hes. fr. 234; Alc. fr. 337 Voigt; Hdt. 1.171; Pherekydes *FGrH* 3 F 155; F. Geyer, *RE* 12.2 (1925) 1890–3; W. Kroll, *ibid.*, 1893.

7. Aristot. fr. 546 (= Strabo 7.7.2); Paus. 1.39.6 and 44.3. On the many foundations of cities by autochthonous heroes see A. Brelich, *Gli eroi Greci* (Rome, 1958) 137–9.

8. See, e.g., G. Busolt, *Griechische Geschichte* I (Gotha, 1893) 182–5. F. Kiechle, *Lakonien und Sparta* (Munich, 1963) 20–9 commits the same methodological error, although to a lesser extent.

9. Strabo 7.7.2 connects the name with the verb (*sul*)lego ‘to speak’. On modern etymologies of *Leleges*, see P. Kretschmer, ‘Die Leleger und die ostmediterrane Urbevölkerung’, *Glotta*, 32 (1952) 161–204, who connects the name with the root *lāg meaning ‘man’ (‘Mensch’); see also H. Frisk, *Griechisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* II (Heidelberg, 1970) 103; Burkert, *S&H*, 132. On the onomatopoeic value of the term *barbaros* as referring only to the acoustic perception of a foreign language, see Hdt. 2.57.

10. Stanek, *Sozialordnung*, 177.

11. Cf. Hes. *Theog.* 116–37; Alc. fr. 5.2 Page (= 81 Calame) with my commentary in *Aleman* (Rome, 1983) 444–54.

12. Cf. Apollod. 3.10.3 (Lelex’s wife is the naiad Kleocharaia); schol. Eur. *Or.* 626 calls Lelex’s wife Peridea (not Peridike, as Schwartz suggests on the basis of a single manuscript); see also J. Andrée-Hanslik, *RE* 19.1 (1937) 720.

13. Paus. 3.20.2, cf. Theophr. fr. 2 Pötscher, M. Detienne, *Les jardins d’Adonis* (Paris, 1972) 194 – 217, and M. Detienne and J.-P. Vernant, *La Cuisine du sacrifice en pays grec* (Paris, 1979) 58–63.

14. Paus. 3.1.1, 4.1. 1f, 4.3.9. The artificial creation of an archaic capital by the Messenians in their attempts at rewriting history after the liberation of their area in the fourth century hampers in exact localisation of Andania; cf. F. Kiechle, *Messenische Studien* (Kallmünz, 1957) 78–81 and below, note 37. It is noteworthy that Paus. 4.31.11 describes a temple decorated with pictures of the Messenian kings beginning with Aphareus.

15. Call. *Cer.* 24–30; Diod. Sic. 5.61.2, cf. E. Wüst, *RE* 7 A (1939) 168–74.

16. Paus. 3.19.9; see also schol. Eur. *Or.* 626.

17. It seems impossible to identify Helen and Menelaos’ ‘Mycenaean’ Sparta (Hom. *Od.* 4.1, 10) with Therapne; cf. P. Cartledge, *Sparta and Lakonia* (London, 1979) 44f, 75–93, 337–9. On the Mycenaean occupation of Therapne and the Menelaion, see H. W. Catling, ‘New Excavations at the Menelaion, Sparta’, in U. Jantzen, *Neue Forschungen in griechischen Heiligtümern* (Tübingen, 1976) 77–90. The studies by C. Bérard and A. Snodgrass, in G. Gnoli and J.-P. Vernant (eds), *La Mort, les morts dans les sociétés anciennes* (Cambridge and Paris, 1982) 89–105 and 107–19, respectively, discuss the foundation of heroic cults on ancient Mycenaean sites.

18. Schol. Eur. *Or.* 626 call Myles’ wife Teledike and not Kleocharaia, as Schwartz wrongly conjectures,

forgetting that according to a different version Kleochareia is Lelex's wife (cf. above, note 12).

19. Schol. Eur. Or. 626; cf. Hes. fr. 234. Deukalion and the Flood: Apollod. 1.7.2; *Marm. Par. FGrH* 239, A 4. On the uncivilised aspects of the personified river before it becomes the Eurotas, see the legend in Ps. Plut. *Fluv.* 17.1, which reverses the genealogical order by making Eurotas son of the nymph Taygete and Lakedaimon (cf. below, note 25).

20. Schol. Eur. Or. 626 attribute to Myles a daughter Pedias (the manuscripts offer the readings *paidian*, *kepedian* and *kepaidian*), but Apollod. 3.14.5 makes Pedias (whose name he considers to be a derivative in *-ad-*) the daughter of the Lacedaemonian Mynes, a name which naturally has to be corrected in Myles (with the genitive *Mylou* rather than *Myletos*). Pedias married the successor of Kekrops to the throne of Attica, Kranaos, whom Apollodorus connects with the time of Deukalion and the Flood.

21. Paus. 3.13.8f; on the connection between marriage and cereal agriculture see J.-P. Vernant, *Mythe et société en Grèce ancienne* (Paris, 1974) 146–51.

22. For the terminology used, see C. Lévi-Strauss, *Les Structures élémentaires de la parenté* (Paris, 1949) 153–87 and S. Tornay, 'L'Etude de la parenté', in J. Copans *et al.*, *L'Anthropologie. Science des sociétés primitives?* (Paris, 1971) 49–111.

23. Cf. F. Bölte, *RE* 3 A.2 (1929) 1267–94 (on the denotations of the names *Lakedaimon* and *Sparte*) and *ibid.*, 1280–92 (Lacedaemonians).

24. Cf. Burkert, *GR* 200–7.

25. See also Apollod. 3.10.3; schol. Eur. Or. 626. Ps. Plut. *Fluv.* 17.3 relates that Taygete, having been raped by Zeus, committed suicide from grief; this suicide took place at Mt Amyklaion, since called Taygetos.

26. Paus. 3.18.10; Pind. *Ol.* 3.30 with the scholia *ad loc.* On Artemis and Taygete see also Hom. *Od.* 6.103; Eur. *Hel.* 381–4.

27. Pind. *Ol.* 3.30 and schol. *ad loc.* = Sosib. *FGrH* 595 F 21; schol. Pind. *Pyth.* 4.15. On the five *obai* which constitute the city of Sparta see, e.g., A. Toynbee, *Some Problems of Greek History* (Oxford, 1969) 260–5; on Euphemos, Poseidon's son, see F. Chamoux, *Gyrène sous la monarchie des Battiades* (Paris, 1953) 83–9.

28. See Paus. 3.1.3; Apollod. 3.10.3; Steph. Byz. s.v. *Amyklai*. On Amyklai's history see most recently Cartledge, *Sparta*, 65–8, 106–8.

29. Apollod. 3.10.3. On the archaeological proofs of Mycenaean Amyklai and its continuous inhabitation into the archaic age, see E. Buschor and M.v. Massow, 'Vom Amyklaion', *Ath. Mitt.*, 52 (1927) 1–85; Cartledge, *Sparta*, 30–101; J. T. Hooker, *The Ancient Spartans* (London and Toronto, 1980) 25–46. On the Hyacinthia in Amyklai see Calame, *Choeurs* I, 305–23; Hooker, *Spartans*, 60–6. Note also that the rhetor Aristides *Or.* 11.79 mentions Apollo as honouring Amyklas, Narcissus and Hyakinthos.

30. See especially Pherecyd. *FGrH* 3 F 10; Apollod. 2.2.1–2; Paus. 3.13.8. On the role of Egyptian Danaos in the Argolid and of Lynkeus, the son of his brother Aigyptos, see G. A. Megaw, 'Die Sage von Danaos und den Danaiden', *Hermes*, 68 (1933) 415–28 and Detienne, *Dionysos*, 37–40.

31. Paus. 3.13.8; cf. H. Hitzig and H. Bluemmer, *Pausaniae Graeciae descriptio*, vol. 1.2 (Leipzig, 1899) 782.

32. Apollod. 3.10.3; Schol. Nic. *Ther.* 902 make Diomedes into a nymph. On Lapithes see Diod. Sic. 4.69.1–5, 5.61.3; Steph. Byz. s.v. *Lapithe*.

33. Paus. 7.18.5; cf. Hitzig and Bluemmer, *Pausaniae Graeciae descriptio*, 811; Hsch. s.v. *Agigaios*.

34. Paus. 3.13.1. Aristid. Mil. *FGrH* 444 F 1 makes Leukippos into Amyklas' son, which makes Koronis, Asklepios' mother by Apollo, Amyklas' granddaughter – a new way of associating Sparta's king with Apollo (cf. n 29). If Kynortas' name is to be associated with the well-known name of the *oba* Kynosoura, Argalos' name cannot but be associated with the *oba* Arkalon which is known from one fifth-century inscription only (IGV. 1.722, 4 = SEG 11.475a, 4); cf. A. J. Beattie, 'An Early Laconian *Lex Sacra*', *CQ.* 45 (1951) 46–58; Kiechle, *Lakonien*, 123–5.

35. Paus. 4.2.2, 4; Apollod. 1.9.5, 2.4.5. On Aiolos' offspring, see Hes. fr. 10; Apollod. 1.7.3. Perieres was known in Sparta at least from the seventh century onwards; cf. Alcman fr. 78 Page = 202 Calame.

36. Paus. 3.15.10; cf. S. Wide, *Lakonische Kulte* (Leipzig, 1893) 45–7; Hes. fr. 199.8; IG XII.3.869, 6; see also E. Wüst, *RE* 17.2 (1932) 2092–5.

37. Paus. 4.3.7, 4.1.5, 4.2.4. Arene's location is even more uncertain than that of Andania, which is situated north of Mt Ithome in the northern part of the Messenian plain; cf. M. N. Valmin, *Etudes topographiques sur la Messénie ancienne* (Lund, 1930) 89–125, 140f.

38. Paus. 4.2.5f; see already Hom. *Od.* 11.235–59. On the various versions of Neleus' legend see M.-C. van der Kolf, *RE* 16.2 (1935) 2269–80. On the history of Pylos and Methone see Kiechle, *Messenische Studien*, 31–3, 65–71.

39. On Lykos see Soph. F 24.2 Radt; Paus. 4.1.5. This is perhaps a very young tradition, cf. W. A.

40. Cf. schol. Hom. *Il.* 2.581; schol. Eur. *Or.* 457. Pellana lies on the eastern slopes of the Taygetos, not far from the sources of the Eurotas, cf. Strabo 8.4.4 and 7.5; Pellana is also Lykurgos' refuge (Pol. 4.81.7). On Tyndareus' flight to Pellana see also Paus. 3.21.2; on his flight to Thestios see Apollod. 3.10.5; Strabo 10.2.24, which perhaps derives from the epic poem the *Alcmaeonis* (cf. fr. 5 Kinkel). Cf. also Apollod. 3.10.4f which makes Ikarios into Tyndareus' companion.

41. Hippokoontidai: J. Zwicker, *RE* 8. 2(1913) 1774–6; Henrichs, this volume, Ch. 11, section 2. On the Spartan cults of the Hippokoontidai and Dioskouroi see Wide, *Lakonische Kulte*, 304–25; Calame, *Chœurs* I, 332f, 347f and II, 54f.

42. Castor and Pollux as sons of Tyndareus: Hom. *Od.* 11.298–305; sons of Zeus: Hes. fr. 24. Double ascendance: *H. Hom.* 17.2, 33.1f; Ale. fr. 2, 10(b) Page = 2, 82a Calame (in Sparta itself at the end of the seventh century); see also E. Bethe, *RE* 5 (1905) 1112f.

43. *H. Hom.* 17.3, 33.4; Paus. 3.36.2 (deriving from Alc. fr. 23 Page = 211 Calame); Paus. 3.1.4.

44. Hom. *Il.* 5.396f and 11.689–761 already mentions Herakles' intervention in Pylos; Sosibios *FGrH* 595 F 13 the one in Sparta, which is already mentioned by Alc. fr. 1 Page = 3 Calame. For a detailed discussion, with all sources, see Calame, *Chœurs* II, 52–9.

45. On the rivalry between the Apharetidai and Tyndaridai concerning the Leukippidai, who were the incarnation of the newly initiated girls ready for marriage, see the detailed discussion in Calame, *Chœurs* I, 326–33.

46. Pind. *Nem.* 10.71f; cf. Calame, 'Les figures grecques du gigantesque', *Communications*, 42 (1985) 147–72.

47. Divine origin of Helen: Hom. *Il.* 3.199, 488; *Od.* 4.184, 23.218, etc. Leda as mother of Helen and the Dioskouroi: S. Eitrem, *RE* 12.1 (1924) 1116–25. Death of the Dioskouroi: *Cypr.* fr. 5 and 9 Kinkel; Apollod. 3.11.2. Contest for Helen's hand: Stes. fr. 190 Page; Eur. *Iph. Aul.* 58; Isocr. *Hel.* 10.40; Apollod. 3.10.8. Note that only Paus. 3.1.5 (rather vague in this respect) lets the Tyndaridai themselves rule for a time.

48. Stes. fr. 216 Page even moves Agamemnon's palace from Mykenae to Sparta (cf. also Sim. fr. 549 Page). Pindar *Pyth.* 11.32 situates the palace at Amyklai, in this way re-establishing virilocality. The uxoriocal and matrilinear character of Helen's wedding with Menelaos has nothing to do with matrarchy, as is suggested by S. Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves* (New York, 1975) 22f.

49. Orestes in Sparta: Pind. *Pyth.* 9.24, 27 and *Nem.* 11.44; Paus. 2.18.6, 3.16.7. Hom. *Il.* 3.175 already knows Hermione as the only daughter of Helen and Menelaos, but in the *Odyssey* (4.4–17) she marries Achilles' son, Neoptolemos. Eur. *Or.* 1653–9 (note also *Andr.* 966–76) combines both versions of the legend. At least Sophocles (*TGrF* 3, p. 192 Radt = Eust. *Od.* 1479.10–12) already mentions Orestes' marriage with Hermione.

50. On Teisamenos and his eviction by the Herakleidai, see the summary of Sophocles' *Hermione* (quoted n 49); Paus. 2.18.7f, 2.38.1, 7.1.7; Apollod. 2.8.2–3; Pol. 2.41.4; Strabo 8.7.1, etc.

51. Cf. C. Robert, *Die griechische Heldensage* I (Berlin, 1920) 656–64, 671–75; C. Brillante, *La leggenda eroica e la civiltà micenea* (Rome, 1981) 149–82 (from a historical perspective; F. Prinz, *Gründungsmythen und Sagenmythologie* (Münich, 1979) 299–313).

52. Kresphontes: Isocr. 6.22; Plat. *Leg.* 692b; Apollod. 2.8.4. Aristodemos and Argia: Hdt. 6.52f, 7.204, 8.131, cf. G. L. Huxley, 'Herodotos on Myth and Politics in Early Sparta', *Proc. Roy. Irish Ac.* 101 (1983) 1–16, and P. Carlier, *La Royauté en Grèce avant Alexandre* (Strasbourg, 1984) 375–80.

53. Cf. Calame, *Chœurs* I, 305–23 and 341–50 on the political significance of both Helen and Menelaos' cult at Therapne and of the Hyakinthia festival celebrated at Amyklai; see also Brillante, *La leggenda eroica*, 87–145.

54. Cf. O. Regenbogen, *RE* Suppl. 8 (1956) 1019–24; L. Beschi and D. Musti, *Pausania. Guida della Grecia I. L'Attica* (Milan, 1982) XXIV–XXXV. Pausanias' book 4 on Messenia in general derives its information from the histories written after the liberation of Messenia in the fourth century (Rhianos and Myron); cf. L. Pearson, 'The Pseudo-History of Messenia and its Authors', *Historia*, 11 (1962) 397–426.

55. Paus. 2.18.6 (= Cinaeth. fr. 4 Kinkel), 3.13.8 (= Asius fr. 6 Kinkel = test. 7 Gentili/Prato). On these two indirect citations and the possible dates of these two poets, see G. L. Huxley, *Greek Epic Poetry* (London, 1969) 40, 80f, 94–6. When introducing the Spartan genealogical narrative, Pausanias (3.1.1) simply speaks of an (oral?) Lakedaemonian tradition.

56. Tyrt. fr. 2.2–15 West = la.12–15 Gentili/Prato; Alc. fr. 1.1–11 Page = 3.1–11 Calame and 7 P = 19 C; see also Alc. fr. 2 P = 2 C; on the legendary tradition which connects the Spartan king list with the Herakleidai see Cartledge, *Sparta*, 53, 341–6.

57. On the double conquest of Messenia and the various military interventions of Sparta against Argos see, especially, G. L. Huxley, *Early Sparta* (London, 1962) 56–9, 68f, 83f; Cartledge, *Sparta, passim*; Hooker, *Spartans*, 106–14, 145–57.

58. Cf. Huxley, 'Herodotos on Myth', 5–16; on the origin of the Peloponnesian League see A. H. M. Jones, *Sparta* (Oxford, 1968) 44–7.
59. B. Sergent, 'La représentation spartiate de la royauté', *Rev. Hist. Rel.*, 189 (1976) 3–52 and 'Le partage du Péloponnèse entre les Héraclides', *Rev. Hist. Rel.*, 190 (1977) 121–36 and 191 (1978) 3–25.
60. Cf. A. J. Greimas and J. Courtès, *Sémiotique. Dictionnaire raisonné de la théorie du langage* (Paris, 1979) 29–33, 157–60, 380f; J. -C. Coquet, 'L'Ecole de Paris', in J. -C. Coquet (ed.), *Sémiotique. L'Ecole de Paris* (Paris, 1982) 5–64, esp. 48–52.
61. Cf. M. -J. Borel *et al.*, *Essai de logique naturelle* (Bern, 1983) 53–70 on the *processus de 'schématisation'*.
62. Cf. L. Gallo, 'La donna greca e la marginalità', *Quad. Urb. Cult. Class.*, 47 (1984) 7–51.
63. See Calame, 'Le processus symbolique', *Document de travail du Centro Internazionale di Semiotica e di Linguistica* (Urbino, 1983) 128–9.

Myths of Early Athens

Robert Parker

In memory of T. C. W. Stinton *

In glamour and ancient renown, Athenian mythology can scarcely compete with several other regional mythologies of Greece. Few Athenian heroes appear in early sources, and perhaps the only ancient Attic *geste* of the first quality was that of Theseus with the Minotaur. Attic mythology has none the less a distinctive interest for the mythographer, for several reasons. Rare though Attic stories may be in Homer or Hesiod, in Apollodorus and Ovid they abound. In the fifth and fourth centuries Athens and Athenians increasingly dominated literary and artistic culture, while there emerged in Attidography a distinctive literary genre specifically concerned with the country's antiquities, including its mythology. As a result many existing local stories were dignified with a place in high art and literature, and not a few others were told for the first time. Thus the development of Attic mythology is a notable instance of the invention of tradition'.¹ Most of these stories have public and sometimes political themes. While the myth of Oedipus, say, is only coincidentally Theban, the Attic myths are almost all intrinsically Attic, in that the city's origins and institutions form their subject. Only two cycles treat that most characteristic theme of Greek mythology as a whole, the tensions and traumas of domestic life.² Attic mythology is therefore a distinctively 'political mythology',³ through which the Athenians forged a sense of their identity as a people. The quite extraordinary development that the figure of Theseus underwent in the fifth century is a glittering example of an 'invention of tradition' which was also the forging of a 'political myth'.⁴

A final attraction of Attic mythology is the opportunity it offers of observing a set of myths in a specific social and historical context. A myth is an item of shared cultural property, and has no intrinsic or essential meaning. Even if one could find what Mr Casaubon⁵ and so many others have sought, a 'Key to (all) Mythologies', it would only turn to reveal an empty room. To speak of a myth's 'meaning' is legitimate only as a shorthand way of referring to the sum of the qualities that cause people to listen to it with interest and remember it. And that is all that the interpreter needs to or can explain, the

source of a myth's appeal for a particular society at a particular time. (This is not, of course, to deny that a myth may continue to appeal to many different societies for broadly the same reasons.) Myths ought therefore to be approached through a study of 'hearer/viewer response' and 'reception', if we may borrow and adapt these terms of contemporary literary theory.⁶ Of course, we can almost never in the ancient world study the 'reception' of a myth with proper precision, and often we are reduced to guessing about possible responses from a mere summary of the plot. But the Attic myths are an unusually favourable case, because rich and diverse contemporary evidence is often available, from vase painting and sculpture as well as from literature.

In myths as in organisms, the capacity for change seems to be almost a condition of life. One of the striking characteristics of Greek mythology as a whole is the way in which it retained that life-giving mutability long after the introduction of writing.⁷ Of the approaches to mythology that are familiar today, the one that seems most old-fashioned is in some respects the most soundly based theoretically: for the painstaking historical analysis of the variants and development of a myth does justice to this power of change, as well as being a kind of study of 'reception'. The weakness of that method, which received its classic expression in the work of Carl Robert,⁸ was the lurking presumption that in mythology as in textual criticism the point of studying the variants is to get back to the uncorrupted original, where meaning resides. But it is obviously unsatisfactory to 'explain' the myth of Oedipus by reference to a (as it happens, hypothetical) ritual origin, an origin unknown to the millions of people who have heard the myth with fascination. There is perhaps no helpful discrimination to be drawn in terms of 'authenticity' between different variants of a myth or stages in its development, or between 'real myth' and 'literary myths' or the like. Certainly, very drastic alterations do take place in the character of the mythological tradition. Important variables include the social context in which myths are reproduced, the literary or artistic form in which they are embodied, the principles by which they are organised, the toleration of supernatural elements within them, the competition that they undergo from accounts of the past based on different principles, the esteem in which they are held, and, simply but crucially, the extent to which they are widely familiar. But it is always the same river that flows through this changing landscape. There are developments in the tradition but no breaks; no point can be located where myth ceases, as it were, to be itself.⁹ Even the extensive effort by fourth-century writers to systematise and rationalise received mythology, which was doubtless the most significant single reshaping of the tradition, did not lack antecedents;¹⁰ and in attempting to preserve the myths as history rather than jettison them as fable these writers perpetuated one of mythology's ancient functions, that of providing an account of the past. Perhaps we should consider the history of mythology not as a decline from myth into non-myth but as a succession of periods or styles, developing out of one another, as in art. That metaphor,

however, does not remove but emphasises the need to distinguish between the products of different periods.

The period chosen for this essay is the second half of the fifth century, for which the evidence is most abundant. The stories will be presented according to their rough chronology in mythological time. It is unlikely, though, that many Athenians at this date thought of them in this way. Many people doubtless knew something of the order of the kings, but the important point about most of the stories was surely not their place in a chronological sequence. Who even now can say offhand whether Demeter or Dionysos arrived in Attica first? (There is an answer to that question; but one puzzles in vain whether the rape of Cephalus came before or after that of Orithyia.) The systematisation of the tradition was the work of the Atthidographers, beginning with Hellanicus at the end of the fifth century. They introduced new kings to the king-list,¹¹ to make the chronology of Attic myth match better with that of Greece as a whole, and must have been obliged to assign every floating story to a specific reign. In the fifth century there were already one or two works that grouped Attic myths together,¹² but probably most Athenians learnt them not in that form, as a cycle, but one by one as they were portrayed in particular works of art or poems or told in relation to particular cults or shrines. What really mattered chronologically about the myths was that they described events of the 'generation of heroes' (Hdt. 3.122) and not of men.

Not every Athenian myth can be discussed in the space available. Since the later traditions, largely dominated by Theseus, have been much and well studied of late, we will concentrate on the earlier ones, those that fall in mythological time before the death of Erechtheus. The Eleusinian myth of Demeter's arrival and the largely apolitical myth of Cephalus and Procris are deliberately excluded; other omissions will probably be accidental.¹³ With these preliminaries completed, Athenian history can commence.¹⁴

It begins, one might say, with the birth of Athena.¹⁵ She was one of several Olympians whose birth was miraculous; this was a mark of their high destiny as well as a symptom of the unsettled conditions of a young world. She was born, without a mother, from Zeus' head; she leapt forth, fully mature in all but size and heavily armed, to the wonder and terror of the attendant gods. That much is common to virtually all the descriptions and representations of the birth. There is evidently a connection between Athena's strange origin and her strange nature. The goddess who 'loves din and war and battle' (Hes. *Theog.* 926) has wholly escaped from feminine influence and is in the most literal sense a 'father's child' (Aesch. *Eum.* 738; cf. Pearson on Soph. fr. 564). The weakness of infancy, when even men are womanly, is not for her; and there is a metallic brilliance about her epiphany appropriate to one who never lurked in 'the darkness of the womb' (Aesch. *Eum.* 665). As a female who 'sided with the male in everything (short of accepting marriage)' (Aesch. *Eum.* 737), the friendly helper of male heroes, she was the ideal patroness for patriarchal Athens. At the same time, her origin from the most dignified part,

indeed almost the 'self of Zeus, explains her unique and for Athenians most welcome closeness to the lord of the universe (e.g. Aesch. *Eum.* 826–8, 997–1102).¹⁶ In many vase paintings, Hephaestus has helped the birth by cleaving Zeus' head with an axe (cf. Pind. *Ol.* 7.35–8) and is shown hurrying away, alarmed no doubt by the exuberant creature who has emerged. It was right that one god of crafts should assist at the birth of another, and the Athenians, for whom the association of Athena and Hephaestus was particularly important, evidently relished the motif.¹⁷

It is not clear whether certain more elaborate accounts, which set the birth in a broader mythological context, were well known at Athens. For Hesiod, it was associated with a threat to Zeus' newly established sovereignty, and with the power of *metis*, wiliness, 'cunning intelligence'. Metis (personified), Zeus' first wife, was to have borne first Athena, then a son mightier than its father. Zeus therefore swallowed her; Athena emerged from his head, the son remained unborn (Hes. *Theog.* 886–900; cf. 'Hes.' fr. 343).¹⁸ The myth explained the unique resourcefulness of Zeus, who had assimilated Metis, and of Athena, whose mother she was. It also confirmed that there were to be no more revolutions in heaven. *Metis* was now under control, shared with the loving daughter, the father's child, but not with an independent threatening son. A further elaboration (already partially present in Hesiod *Theog.* 927–9; cf. fr. 343.1) made the birth part of a contest in asexual generation between Zeus and the jealous Hera. This ended in decisive humiliation for the woman, since Zeus without Hera could produce splendid Athena, Hera without Zeus merely crippled Hephaestus and the monster Typhoeus (*Hom. H. Ap.* 305–55). The respective role of the two parents in generation was long to be controversial in Greek thought, and the myth reads like a comic anticipation of Aristotle's doctrine that the child's form derives from the father, the mother providing merely the less honourable matter.¹⁹ Thus Athena's lack of a mother became less a way of describing her unique nature than of making a point about the relation of the sexes. We do not know how many Athenians drew this conclusion from the myth, but Aeschylus' Apollo certainly does, in a famous passage in *Eumenides* (658–66).²⁰

As it happens, there is more artistic than literary evidence for the myth's popularity at Athens, and so the nuances of its reception there remain uncertain. From about 570–530 it was a favourite subject for vase painters. It then declined in popularity and had almost disappeared by 460, but remained such a central Athenian myth that it could not be omitted from the Parthenon: in a somewhat rationalised iconography, with Athena standing beside Zeus rather than emerging from his head, it occupied the important east pediment.²¹ The association between Athena and Zeus was probably the most important single source of the myth's appeal for the Athenians. It meant that they too had contact along a chain of patronage with the ruler of the world. As we shall see, 'dearness to the gods' (*theophilia*) is a central concern of many of these myths,²² and 'dearness to Zeus' is of course its most desirable form.

Athena took an active part in the War of the Gods and Giants, another Panhellenic myth that had been so thoroughly assimilated by the Athenians that it must be included here.²³ There are indeed hints of specific Athenian variants or offshoots,²⁴ among them one that cast Theseus' cousins the Pallantids as giants, but there is no doubt that the dominant version even in Athens was the Panhellenic one. The battle was portrayed on countless vases (from about 565), on the pediment of the sixth-century temple of Athena, and, in the Parthenon, both on the metopes and inside the shield of Pheidias' cult-statue. Above all, it was the traditional decoration of perhaps the most important symbolic object of Athenian religion, the robe offered to Athena every four years at the greater Panathenaea. The central significance of the myth must have been the same for the Athenians as for the Greeks at large. It told how Zeus had been confirmed in his sovereignty, how therefore the present world-order had been made secure, by a display of tempered force against enemies who were the embodiment of *hybris*, lawless violence. Unlike the earlier war against the Titans (with which, though, it had become confused by the time of Euripides), this was a collective act of all the Olympians, and one undertaken in defence of the existing order and not in rebellion against it. Such a myth of the establishment of divine and cosmic order was fit emblem for the Panathenaea, the great festival of social unity and order.²⁵

There was particular significance for Athenians in the glorious part played by their own warrior-goddess, second only to that of Zeus himself. It established that she was, for all time to come, Athena Victory (Eur. *Ion* 1528–9). Though won in war, this title was equally appropriate to her as patroness of the sporting competitions of the Panathenaea: for Victory in whatever sphere derived from the same golden goddess. Perhaps in the fifth century victory over the giants came to be seen as a prefiguration of the Greeks' famous victories over the barbarians. That symbolism is certainly found in the hellenistic period; and already in the first *Pythian Ode* of 470 (15–28, 71–5) Pindar pointedly juxtaposes Typhoeus, a Giant-like figure, with barbarian enemies. (It was even possible to deploy the imagery against other Greeks, if we accept that the hybristic giants of Pindar's eighth *Pythian* embody a victims' view of Athenian imperialism.)²⁶ At all events, Athena's triumph over Enceladus, laboriously woven on her robe every four years by the Athenian women, helped to guarantee the strength of their menfolk's spears.

From gods we turn to men. Whatever certain antiquarians might say, the general belief among Athenians was that their first king had been Cecrops.²⁷ Cecrops had no parents, but had emerged from the earth itself. No myth described the circumstances of this strange birth, but the most familiar fact about Cecrops was that he bore the mark of it in his 'double form': above the waist he was a man, below a curling snake (e.g. Eur. *Ion* 1163–4; Ar. *Vesp.* 438). Having emerged from the earth, he still in part resembled the creature that slips to and fro between the upper and lower worlds.

The next Attic king Erichthonius/Erechtheus was also earth-born, and vase

painters often show Cecrops as a witness of his successor's birth.²⁸ The juxtaposition suggests that the two legends should be taken together, as a pair. Cecrops in these scenes always has his semi-serpentine form, whereas the baby is fully human. The effect of this contrasted juxtaposition of the two earth-born kings is twofold: on the one hand it emphasises the idea of autochthony, since the Athenian royal line proves to be earth-born twice over, while on the other differentiation and progress are revealed, with Cecrops representing an intermediate stage between wholly earthy and wholly human.²⁹ Upon Cecrops are unloaded all the sinister connotations of pre-human birth.

The birth of Erichthonius/Erechtheus is one of the earliest-attested Athenian legends. It is mentioned in a passage in the Catalogue of Ships in the *Iliad* which will surely go back at least to the sixth century, even if it is an 'Attic interpolation'.³⁰ The passage speaks of

great-spirited Erechtheus, whom once Athena daughter of Zeus
reared, but the grain-giving soil bore him, and Athena set him down in
Athens, in her rich temple

(2.547–9).

The future king is born from the ground, but taken at once by a goddess into her care. This central idea is illustrated on the fifth-century vases: a goddess emerges from the ground and hands to the waiting Athena a baby, which stretches eagerly to meet its new nurse. By the end of the sixth century the child had been given a father, Hephaestus, who is sometimes shown attending the birth. Hephaestus had been seeking to rape Athena but the virgin evaded him, his seed fell on the ground, and from it sprung Erichthonius/Erechtheus.³¹ This story of amorous mischance suited the mythological Hephaestus, constantly subject to ludicrous indignities, but the substantial point of the invention was surely to put the proto-Athenian under the joint patronage of Athena and Hephaestus.

Erichthonius/Erechtheus has sometimes been identified as an instance of a figure characteristic of Minoan-Mycenaean religion, the 'divine child' growing up in the care of foster-nurses. But, however things may have been in early times, post-Mycenaean Greeks must surely have felt a difference between, say, baby Zeus, a god in exile, and baby Erechtheus, a child of the earth protected by a powerful goddess. All the Athenians accessible to us seem to have understood the birth of Erichthonius/Erechtheus as a myth of national origins. There was no separate tradition about the Athenians at large: the two earth-born kings are mythical representatives of the whole Athenian people in their claim to autochthony. Indeed in poetry (particularly) the Athenians were sometimes spoken of as actual descendants of their first kings, as 'Cecropids' or 'Erechtheids'.³²

What then did this myth of national origins say? It put the proto-Athenian in the closest possible relation with Athena, while respecting her virginity; in

its developed form it introduced Athena's regular associate Hephaestus as a kind of father for the child. Thus the Athenians were 'children of blessed gods' (Eur. *Med.* 825), living in 'a land most dear to the gods' (Aesch. *Eum.* 869). There was no more important guarantee of prosperity than this.³³ As 'children of Hephaestus' the Athenians were marked, intriguingly, as a technological people (Aesch. *Eum.* 13). One wonders whether that conception was more popular outside Attica or within it, and whether in Athens it was as dear to the knights, say, as to the potters.³⁴

The myth also, of course, endorses the Athenians' claim to the prized 'autochthony'. Indeed it shows a lawyer's cunning in insisting that the Athenians are 'born from the earth', while reserving their title as 'children of blessed gods'. In ordinary language 'autochthonous' meant little more than 'native' as opposed to 'immigrant': the myth interprets the idea of 'nativeness' with drastic if logical literalism, as physical birth from the native soil. The Athenians were probably correct in believing that they had occupied the same territory for longer than most of the Greek states around them. From this historical reality they created what every state requires, a myth to make its citizens glad that they were born in that state and no other. The ideal of autochthony was a form of collective snobbery. Athenians *en masse* were invited to despise other states (Dorians above all) just as an aristocrat might despise a metic. Athenians were, so to speak, the only authentic citizens of Greece, all other groups being mere immigrants, a motley rabble tainted with foreign blood.³⁵ No patriotic orator could neglect the theme, and many new twists were discovered: only the Athenians had a truly filial relation to their native land; they were juster than other Greeks, because they held their land by birthright and not seizure; they were even born egalitarians, being all sprung from the same earth.³⁶

These hyper-patriotic interpretations are first attested in the 420s (Hdt. 7.161.3; Eur. *Erechtheus* fr. 50.6–13), at a time when anti-Dorian sentiment was no doubt particularly strong because of the Peloponnesian war (cf. Thuc. 6.77.1, with K. J. Dover's note). They are applied, then and later, to the general notion of Athenian autochthony, not to the particular myths of Cecrops and Erichthonius. We cannot strictly prove that these latter had originally been understood in the same way; they might in theory have been merely myths of origin, answering the question 'where do Athenians come from?', rather than myths of an origin superior to that other states. An increase in patriotic emphasis there no doubt was, in the heyday of the funeral orations; in all probability, though, some association between autochthony and 'true birth' (cf. Ar. *Vesp.* 1076) had always been present.

Erichthonius/Erechtheus' childhood did not pass off without incident. Athena hid the child in a chest with a snake or snakes to guard him, and gave the chest to the daughters of Cecrops, Pandrosus, Aglaurus and Herse, to keep, with instructions not to open it. But they did, and, terrified by the sight of the snakes, they hurled themselves from the Acropolis, where they lived, to their

death on the rocks below (Eur. *Ion* 21–4, 271–4). Most accounts add that one daughter, normally Pandrosus, remained obedient to Athena and escaped her sisters' fate.³⁷ As has long been recognised, this myth very probably has its origin in ritual performed by the Arrephoroi, young girls in the service of Athena who lived on the Acropolis for a period, at the end of which they made a ritual descent (perhaps from the Acropolis) carrying sacred objects, the nature of which they were forbidden to know.³⁸ But since the story, a popular one with vase painters (Eur. *Ion* 271), had clearly escaped from the narrow sacral context, we need to consider the source of its more general appeal.

It is based upon two popular narrative motifs, the 'disobeyed command' and 'good and bad sisters'. Into this frame it fits characters who were of intrinsic interest to Athenians: Aglaurus and Pandrosus (though not Herse) were prominent figures in cult, and, like so many heroes of Athens' earliest myths, had precincts on or near the Acropolis. Indeed the story to some extent explains familiar topographical facts, since the survivor Pandrosus had her precinct on the heights of the Acropolis, while that of Aglaurus who leapt to her death was on the slopes below it.³⁹ Even more interesting than the sisters perhaps was the snake associated with the young Erichthonius/Erechtheus: for the most famous inhabitant of the Acropolis was the sacred snake that lived, very suitably, in the precinct of Erichthonius/Erechtheus, and was believed to guard the city (Hdt. 8.41) just as its mythical predecessor had guarded the wonder-child. Is it coincidence that a recently discovered vase which portrays this myth introduces the figure of *Soteria*, 'safety, salvation'? Possibly the myth evoked indirectly quite powerful feelings about the safety of the city.⁴⁰ And whether or not this public association was present, it certainly established a link between Erichthonius/Erechtheus, the exemplary proto-Athenian, the nursling of Athena, and any Athenian woman's own child: for Athenian women put gold amulets in the form of snakes around their own babies, 'observing the custom of their forefathers and of earth-born Erichthonius' (Eur. *Ion* 20–6, 1427–9).

Apollodorus introduces a detail absent from other accounts. Athena was rearing Erichthonius in secret from the gods because she hoped to make him immortal; and that, it seems, was why she hid him in a box and entrusted him to the Cecropids (*Bibl.* 3.14.6). Presumably the girls' meddling spoilt the goddess's plans. This is a motif more familiar from the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, where Demeter's attempt to immortalise the Eleusinian prince Demophon fails through human weakness (226–74). It perhaps better suits the Eleusinian context, since the story of immortality (inevitably) lost seems there to prepare for a second best, the institution of Mysteries that help mortals to secure a better lot in the afterlife (*Hymn* 270–4, 470–82). In relation to the bright hope of early Athens, by contrast, the tragic note jars. It may none the less have been heard by some; there is no way of telling when the assimilation of Erichthonius to Demophon may have first occurred.⁴¹

In one respect, there was something unsatisfactory about the myth even in

its familiar form. In cult Aglaurus was patroness of the ephebes, the city's future warriors, and yet the myth showed her first disobedient, then panic-stricken. The anomaly was removed in a probably fourth-century version by a characteristic procedure of adaptation and conflation.⁴² In this account Aglaurus did indeed hurl herself to her death from the Acropolis – but in response to an oracle declaring that the war against Eleusis would only end when an Athenian sacrificed himself for the city. The motif of a saving sacrificial death is obviously borrowed from the older Athenian legends of the daughters of Leos and Erechtheus; with the help of it, the patroness of the ephebes became a true model for them to follow.

As the most prominent female Athenians of the earliest times, the daughters of Cecrops were credited with descendants.⁴³ In particular, one of them, variously identified, was seduced by Hermes and gave birth to Keryx, founding father of the Eleusinian family of the Kerykes. This simple and appropriate aetiological tradition is doubtless ancient, but there is as yet no trace in classical sources of the complex story of greed, erotic intrigue and jealousy that was later spun out of it.⁴⁴

About the doings of Cecrops himself there is little to be said. When in the fourth century the Athidographers constructed a systematic account of the growth of civilisation in Attica, he became a key figure who introduced the first basic institutions of a way of life removed from barbarism. He brought the Attic people together into the first twelve townships and established the earliest Athenian rituals, those that were conducted in the innocent ancient way without blood sacrifice and that honoured the old gods who ruled before Zeus. Cecrops is seen, as it were, as Kronos to Erichthonius/Erechtheus' Zeus, and his reign takes on certain tinges of the golden age. He was eventually credited with the foundation of many institutions, including that of marriage. A kind of mythographic imagination was, certainly, still at work in shaping the image of Cecrops as a 'culture hero'; but there is no trace of this conception in the fifth century, and even in the fourth century perhaps not before Philochorus.⁴⁵

In the early tradition the one great event of his reign was the contest of Athena and Poseidon for Attica. This was the subject of the west pediment of the Parthenon,⁴⁶ and very appropriately, since two familiar sights of the Acropolis were the central items of evidence in the gods' dispute. Poseidon asserted his claim to the land by striking the rock with his trident and bringing forth a salt spring, the famous 'sea' of the Erechtheum; Athena planted the first of all olive-trees, that which still grew in the fifth century in the Pandroseum. One picture of the scene even emphasises these local associations by introducing the sacred snake of the Erechtheum.⁴⁷ For want of an early narrative account, several details are obscure. Cecrops was certainly involved in the dispute, either as actual judge, appointed 'because of his virtue', or as a witness, the judges being the twelve gods.⁴⁸ In late versions the land was to belong to the god who could offer the greater benefits to Attica. Accordingly,

they caused their respective symbols, the olive-tree and the 'sea' (or a horse), to spring from the ground during the actual trial. It looks as if in the classical legend the issue was merely one of priority.⁴⁹ Immediately on arrival in Attica, Poseidon brought forth the sea, and Athena planted the olive, as ways of staking their respective claims to the land. A quarrel ensued, during which Poseidon possibly threatened the sacred olive with his trident, and Zeus possibly hurled a thunderbolt to separate the disputants.⁵⁰ In the ensuing trial, both gods appealed to the tokens as 'evidence' of their prior claim (Hdt. 8.55). Athena prevailed, strangely to our ears, because she had called Cecrops to witness her act of planting, while Poseidon who had in fact arrived first lacked witnesses (Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.14.1).⁵¹ Enraged at the verdict, Poseidon began to flood the Thriasian plain, until ordered by Zeus to desist (Apollod.; Hyg. *Fab.* 164).⁵²

Several features of this myth are clear. It explains Athena's primacy in the city's pantheon, brings drama to the familiar monuments of the Acropolis, and depicts the origin of one of Attica's most characteristic products and most venerable religious symbols:⁵³ for, whatever the goddess's exact motives may have been, it was a great moment when Athena 'revealed the first shoot of the grey olive, a heavenly crown and a glory for bright Athens' (Eur. *Tro.* 802; cf. *Ion* 1433). If an attack on the olive-tree by Poseidon was indeed stayed by the thunderbolt, that would be a further most apposite detail, since Athenians apparently believed that Zeus wielded his thunderbolt in defence of the sacred olives of Attica (Soph. *OC* 705 with schol.). And this is pre-eminently another myth that illustrates Athens' dearness to the gods. 'All men should praise our land ... first and above all because it is dear to the gods. The quarrel and trial of the gods who disputed for it bear witness to what I say. Ought not a land which gods commended to be praised by all mortals?' (Pl. *Menex.* 237c-d). It was a high tribute, too, to Cecrops' qualities that he was permitted to judge between the gods (Xen. *Mem.* iii.5.10).

But the myth perhaps has another and less comfortable aspect. It is one of a group of myths that describe the disputes of gods for particular territories. In these stories, the victor is the city's chief god, while the loser is always Poseidon, except in Sicily where it is Hephaestus.⁵⁴ The loser too is commonly worshipped by the community in question, but he is not just their second most important god. Poseidon is the most fearsome of the Olympians, the sender of storms and earthquakes, and Hephaestus in Sicily had his home in the volcano Etna. There is an implicit connection between the terrifying powers of the god, and his anger at defeat; the myth explains the uncomfortable presence within the state of a dangerous god. In Attica, as we have already noted, the resentful Poseidon threatened floods, while in Argos he took an opposite revenge and left the great plain waterless (Paus. 2.15.5). This Poseidon is the malevolent god of the *Odyssey*; there too, of course, he is opposed to Athena.

It has recently been suggested that our myth was first invented in or near the 470s, as a way of acknowledging mythologically through the figure of

Poseidon the new importance of sea-power in Athenian life.⁵⁵ That suggestion fits ill with the analysis just given, which was based on the broader type to which the Attic myth belongs; for angry Poseidon might be more likely to thwart than to favour Athenian endeavours at sea. That consideration, though, is decisive only for those who put their faith in the fixed meaning of a myth, rather than in its historically varying meanings. The Athenians could have adopted the old mythical pattern but chosen to stress within it Poseidon's interest in Attica rather than his lasting resentment. Certainly, we find later in Plutarch and Aristides the conception of a sporting Poseidon who bears no grudge for defeat (Plut. *Quaest. Conv.* 741a; Aristid. *Panath.* 41 Lenz-Behr). Poseidon could have been appeased and brought round to favour Athens much like the Eumenides of Aeschylus. This is a case where we must practise the art of not knowing. The evidence is just not available that would have shown how the Athenians responded to Poseidon's role in the myth.⁵⁶ The related problem of the myth's date of introduction is similarly insoluble.

Cecrops' only son Erysichthon 'died childless', apparently before his father (Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.14.2). He was remembered as little more than a name, and as (presumably) eponym of the historical Athenian *genos* of the Erysichthonidai. The few traditions about him almost all relate to Delos, and were probably for the most part invented by the propagandist Phanodemus in the fourth century, to prove the antiquity of Athens' interest in that island.⁵⁷ Erysichthon being dead, Erichthonius/Erechtheus probably succeeded Cecrops. (In the fourth-century king-lists, two shadowy kings intruded between them, Cranaus and Amphictyon. Both had been known as names in the fifth century, but there is no indication that they already had a fixed place in the royal genealogy.)⁵⁸ There was no tradition either about the old king's death or about his successor's title to the throne. Such lacunae are wholly characteristic of this early Attic mythology, which had never been put into order in a continuous poetic narrative but existed in fragments associated with particular monuments and cults. Indeed, for Plato, Cecrops, Erechtheus, Erichthonius and Erysichthon are all figures 'whose names have been preserved without their deeds' (*Criti.* 110a). Of Erichthonius/Erechtheus in particular one might say that '*magni stat nominis umbra*'. His pre-eminent role in early Athenian cult is clear from Homer (*Il.* 2.547–51; *Od.* 7.81), and he continued to have great genealogical importance,⁵⁹ but in the fifth century only one heroic deed was recorded of him. Before mentioning that, though, we must touch on the issue of his double name.

In sources of the fifth century and earlier, Erechtheus is much the commoner form. Erichthonius is not securely attested until about 440/30. According to a tradition first found at the same time, they were distinct figures, Erichthonius being the father or grandfather of Erechtheus.⁶⁰ Their deeds too are to some extent distinguished: Erichthonius is never credited with Erechtheus' war against Eleusis, or with his children, while it is he and not Erechtheus who in fourth-century sources founds the Panathenaea. But one crucial myth is shared

between the two. In Homer the earth-born nursling of Athena is Erechtheus (*Il.* 2.547–8); on vase paintings, in *Ion* (267–70) and in most later sources Erichthonius supplants him, though the older tradition still lingers on in Herodotus (8.55). It has often been inferred that Erechtheus and Erichthonius were simply alternative forms of the same name, and that the single figure with two names came to be divided into two figures. The actual development was perhaps more complex,⁶¹ but it certainly seems to be true that we are dealing with joint-heirs to a single mythological inheritance. Erichthonius has no substantial myths of his own, but borrows and usurps from Erechtheus. Erechtheus indeed is forced to yield up his childhood to the older man. This is, of course, another indication of the fragmentation of these traditions, which work with isolated incidents rather than a continuous conception of a whole heroic career.

Erichthonius' only independent action was to found the Panathenaea, and to make certain inventions associated with the festival. These are fourth-century traditions, and must derive from Erichthonius' by then canonical status as nursling of the goddess whom the great festival honoured.⁶² Erechtheus' great exploit was the war against Eumolpus and his Eleusinian or Thracian allies. It was to become the first of what one might call the 'four labours of the Athenians'. This canon was established by the speakers of the public funeral orations that were so distinctive a vehicle of Athenian ideology from about the middle of the fifth century. From the wide existing range of Athenian myths, some of them concerned with individual and domestic life, they selected four that could be reshaped as paradigms of a distinctively Athenian blend of righteousness and valour in the communal enterprise of warfare. Two of the chosen myths celebrated the Athenian heroism that had always in the last resort proved sufficient to repel the threatening incursions of barbarians. Two presented Athens as the common refuge of the oppressed, the state that had both the will and the power to stand up for sacred rights. Characteristically, it was a new social institution, the public funeral, that stimulated this new development in mythology.⁶³

Our first knowledge of the myth comes, appropriately, from Euripides' *Erechtheus*, a work deeply imbued with the patriotic values of the funeral speeches. It was almost certainly produced while work was at progress on the new Erechtheum, the foundation myth of which it told. Eumolpus was the son of Poseidon and of Chione, a Thracian princess who, at least in later tradition, was born of an Athenian mother. After many adventures, he led an army of Thracians into Attica to help the Eleusinians in a war against Athens. He hoped to install his father Poseidon on the Acropolis in place of Athena, and so reverse the unjust outcome of the famous dispute. Erechtheus consulted Delphi, and was told that victory would be his if he sacrificed one of his daughters before the battle. With the consent of his wife Praxithea he did this, and two further daughters sacrificed themselves voluntarily. Erechtheus duly killed Eumolpus and expelled the Thracians, but at the moment of victory

vengeful Poseidon slew him in turn, or persuaded Zeus to do so. On Athena's orders Erechtheus is now worshipped in a fine temple on the Acropolis, bearing the name 'Erechtheus-Poseidon', 'because of him who killed him'. His daughters too receive cult at the place of their death, particularly when invasion threatens, while Praxithea was chosen by the goddess herself to become the first priestess of Athena Polias. And a descendant of Eumolpus in perhaps the fifth generation, again called Eumolpus, founded the Mysteries at Eleusis. Such in outline seems to have been the plot of Euripides' play.⁶⁴ The prologue was probably spoken by Poseidon, the *éxodos* by Athena, so that as in *Hippolytus* the two competing gods ringed the human action of the play.

We have, then, a story of a threatening barbarian invasion that could only be checked by a king's willingness to subordinate his dearest personal interests to the public good. (In later allusions it is the king's attitude rather than that of his wife or hapless daughters that is stressed.) A leader's daughter-sacrifice had been an abomination for Aeschylus, but the theme is here suffused in a warm patriotic glow, and the horror is mitigated as often in Euripides by the victims' ready submission to their fate.⁶⁵ There was, of course, an example in all this for every citizen. On the divine level the war was a re-enactment of the old quarrel between Athena and Poseidon, in yet more threatening terms; for the ever-dangerous god was now aligned with a barbarian horde. In the event Athens remained a Greek and not a barbarian city, Athens and not Poseidonia; and from this victory emerged a whole series of the city's cults, including several of the most celebrated. The play showed the religious order of the city created or confirmed by the patriotism of the citizens.

How much of this complex of motifs antedated Euripides? There are no certain earlier allusions; but passing references in almost contemporary works that are unlikely to be dependent on *Erechtheus* suggest that several features of Euripides' myth – the Eleusinian war, the maiden sacrifice, the destruction of Erechtheus through Poseidon – were already familiar.⁶⁶ One feature that is not attested before Euripides is Eumolpus' Thracian origin. It is thoroughly unexpected, since Eumolpus is evidently the eponym of the Eleusinian priestly *genos* of the Eumolpids, and duly appears as a respectable Eleusinian prince in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* (154). His descent from Poseidon, too, well suits an Eleusinian, since the god was worshipped there under the title 'father' (Paus. 1.38.6). Euripides' version retains the association with Eleusis, but reserves the foundation of the Mysteries for a second Eumolpus five generations later; by then, no doubt, the Thracian blood would have been diluted to an acceptable level.⁶⁷ There has clearly been an innovation here at some date; but it is hard to believe that Euripides had no semblance of authority for changing a war against Eleusinians into a war against Thracians, and so transforming one of the most honoured religious families of all Greece into descendants of a barbarian war-lord. It was probably the prestige at Eleusis of Thracian Orpheus that first made Eumolpus into a Thracian,⁶⁸ that Orpheus who himself came to be seen as founder of the Mysteries. But Thrace

in Athenian mythology had a double significance. It was the home of Orpheus and thus a source of religious revelation, but it was also the first fully barbarian land abutting the Greek mainland. Eumolpus probably became a Thracian because of the first set of associations, only to be transformed by the patriotic tradition into the scapegrace embodiment of the second. There is some evidence that perhaps points to an earlier independent tradition of a war between Erechtheus and the Thracians.⁶⁹ If one existed, it will have eased the transformation of an Atheno–Eleusinian into an Atheno–Thracian conflict. At all events, the fourth-century tradition had almost forgotten that this war had anything to do with Eleusis, and remembered it only as the prototype of the Persian wars, the first incursion of barbarian arms into Greece (e.g. Dem. 60.8).

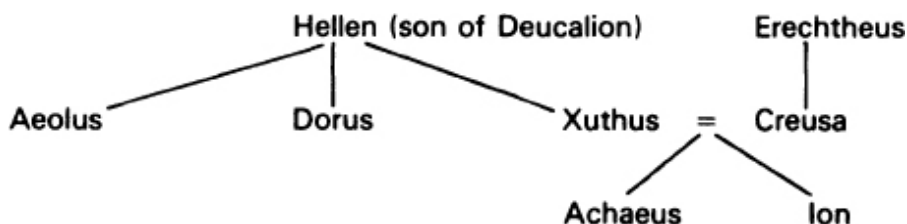
Probably, therefore, the earlier myth used similar motifs in describing a conflict between Athens and Eleusis. (How far the process of transformation had gone before Euripides we cannot say.) Since Poseidon was a prominent Eleusinian god, the divine conflict would have been appropriate in this version too. It used to be thought that the myth in this form reflected an actual historical conflict; but the archaeological support for that view has collapsed, with the demonstration that the supposedly ‘archaic’ defensive wall between Athens and Eleusis belongs to the fourth century.⁷⁰ There is no independent evidence to suggest that Eleusis was incorporated into the Athenian state later than other of the ‘cities’ of Attica, or with any more difficulty. The area in which the relation of Eleusis to Athens was unique was, of course, that of religion. The myth emphasises this special relationship by a technique of contrast (since the war led to peace). Pausanias’ account perhaps suggests the spirit, at least, of the original denouement: ‘They settled the war on the terms that the Eleusinians should be subject to the Athenians in other respects but should conduct the ceremonies themselves.’ (1.38.3). The myth of the war was also no doubt very closely associated with the several rituals that involved processions from Athens to Eleusis (or vice versa), or places *en route*; most particularly, at the Skirophoria, the priest of Poseidon/Erechtheus and the priestess of Athena Polias, in this context a most significant combination, walked out westwards to Skiron, the spot where according to one tradition the decisive battle occurred.⁷¹ The old myth probably dramatised such local (though by no means trivial) themes and concerns; but the struggle between neighbouring Attic communities that it portrayed could be seen as disreputable, and it had to give way to the great saga of the barbarian repelled.

Erechtheus had several further daughters. One was Orithyia, the bride of Boreas the North Wind. Whether the bearer of such a name (‘she who races in the mountains’?)⁷² had always been a royal princess must be doubtful, but that is how the only myth we know portrays her. Orithyia was not the only girl to have been swept away by a storm (cf. Hom. *Od.* 20.66–78), and at one level the myth expresses the frightening power of a force of nature. But Boreas was a god as well as a wind, and it also illustrates the ‘rough favour’ (Aesch. Ag. 182–3) of the Olympians in their dealings with mortals. The rape of mortal

by god has two aspects. On the one hand it is a frightening and irresistible incursion, a seigneurial act of power; but it is also a contact of rare intimacy between the two worlds, which gives the victim's family and community almost unique claims upon the condescending god. This is a theme upon which, in a different context, Euripides plays poignantly in one of his loveliest choral odes (*Troades* 820–58). Appropriately, therefore, the rape often takes place amid an assemblage of early Attic heroes; Cecrops and his three daughters as well as Erechtheus are all present and named, in defiance of chronology, on an amphora by the Orithyia painter, and Athena, too, often watches the scene without obvious disapproval. Boreas was rough and alien enough (witness the vase paintings), but he knew how to be grateful, as the help he gave against the Medes in 492 and again in 480 well showed, when the Athenians accepted the advice of an oracle (Hdt. 7.189) to 'call on their son-in-law' for aid. (The Athenians at large are conceived, revealingly, as sharing in relationships contracted by Erechtheus). This display of divine gratitude in a crisis was the source of the myth's great popularity in the fifth century. The many vase paintings, the monumental sculptures, the play by Aeschylus, the new temple of Orithyia by the Ilissus all served to remind the Athenians of how they overcame the Medes through the help of friends in high places.⁷³ When they decorated their temple of Apollo on Delos with two scenes of Athenians raped by immortals, they were proclaiming to the world the gods' great love for Athens.⁷⁴

Orithyia's marriage was not without issue; and some of her children, Zetes and Calais and Cleopatra, wife of Phineus, were to achieve fame in the mythological world. Through them Attica acquired a rather distant connection with the glamorous Argonautic expedition. The origin of this association is uncertain, but it was certainly known to Sophocles: the chorus in *Antigone* ponder the melancholy fate that befell Cleopatra, daughter of a god and granddaughter of an Athenian though she was (966–87).⁷⁵

Another daughter of Erechtheus made an influential marriage in the early time, when mankind had only existed for three generations and was still being divided into its racial groups. We encounter here a central concern of Greek political mythology, the genealogical relations of peoples. In this case, a controversy about the origins and thus the obligations of the Ionians is fought out through the person of the hero Ion. A recently published fragment of the Hesiodic *Catalogue*⁷⁶ has confirmed that the following stemma is ancient:



So juxtaposed, Ion and Achaeus are evidently patrons of Achaea in the northwest Peloponnese, which was recognised by the nine Ionian cities of Asia Minor as their homeland and according to tradition had once been called Ionia (Diod. Sic. 15.49.1). Numerous sources duly associate the heroes with this region, from Herodotus (7.94) onwards. But Athens too claimed to be 'the most ancient land of Ionia' (Solon fr. 4a.2 West), and her status as such is recognised in the choice of an Athenian mother (a daughter of Erechtheus, naturally) for Ion. Pseudo-Hesiod's genealogy is perhaps a compromise between two beliefs or claims about the site of the true primeval Ionia. Certainly Ion himself is connected by Herodotus with Athens (8.44) as well as with Achaea, and is repeatedly forced to migrate physically from the one place to the other in more elaborate later accounts.⁷⁷

Thus Athenians of the fifth century inherited a tradition which associated Ion with Athens, but a little precariously, through his mother only. It was therefore a problem to explain how he had achieved such prominence at Athens that the four Attic tribes were named after his sons (Hdt. 5.66; Eur. *Ion* 1575–81), as in terms of mythological genealogy they necessarily were: for these tribe names were also found in Ionia proper, and so were a prime part of that heritage of Ion which was transmitted through Athens to the broader Ionic world.⁷⁸ The best that could be done was to say that Ion was summoned to serve as 'general' in a dangerous war (Erechtheus' against the Thracians, when it is identified), and owed his influence to military success.⁷⁹ An exception had of course to be made here, in Ion's favour, to the normal mythological rule that kings are their own generals. It was perhaps Euripides in *Ion* who first adopted the radical solution of eliminating the boy's foreign father in favour of Apollo.⁸⁰ As Ion was now of pure Athenian blood (with a dash of ichor), he became a fit heir to the throne of Erechtheus (*Ion* 1573–4). Euripides duly installs him there,⁸¹ in defiance of tradition, and without explaining how the throne passed back from Ion's line to Erechtheus' normal successor, Pandion. Athens' relations with her Ionian allies were at this date crucial for her very survival (cf. *Ion* 1584–5), and it was not inopportune to place the Ionians' ancestor at the very centre of primitive Athenian society.⁸² Nor will Athenians have resented the notion that after conceiving Ion by a god, Creusa went on to bear Dorus and Achaeus to a mortal (*Ion* 1589–94): Ion's uncle Dorus was thus reduced to his younger half-brother, born of inferior and, to boot, half-Athenian stock. But Euripides' innovation (if such indeed it was) was too bold to be taken up by the subsequent tradition, and Ion remained a general and an immigrant. And this was, perhaps, not an inappropriate expression of the Athenians' own sense of their Ionian identity. An Athenian was of course an Ionian, and at certain times it was important to insist on the point; but in general being an Ionian was very much secondary to the central business of being an Athenian.

Erechtheus was succeeded by.... But we must leave the Athenians as Bacchylides portrays them in his eighteenth ode, Waiting for Theseus.⁸³

Notes

* Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood and I join in paying tribute to a fine scholar and mythographer, whose generosity towards other scholars in time and ideas always seemed to have no limits.

1. Cf. E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, 1983). The gradual emergence in literature of Attic myths is surveyed by E. Ermatinger, *Die attische Autochthonensage bis auf Euripides* (Berlin, 1897) 1–36.

2. Cephalus and Procris; Procne, Philomela and Tereus.

3. Cf. H. Tudor, *Political Myth* (London, 1972).

4. See, e.g., W. R. Connor, 'Theseus in Classical Athens', in A. G. Ward *et al.*, *The Quest for Theseus* (London, 1970) 143–74; F. Graf, *Griechische Mythologie* (Munich and Zurich, 1985) 130–5.

5. In George Eliot's novel *Middlemarch*.

6. See, e.g., T. Eagleton, *Literary Theory* (Oxford, 1983) Ch. 2.

7. Cf. Detienne, *Invention*, Ch. 2.

8. Culminating in the venerable *Die griechische Heldensage* (Berlin, 1920–6).

9. On the continuing vitality of the myths see P. Veyne, *Les Grecs ont-ils cru à leurs mythes?* (Paris, 1983), *passim*; on the developments, Bremmer, this volume, Ch. 1, section 2.

10. There was extensive systematisation, of a kind, in the Hesiodic *Catalogue* cf. the 7th/6th century: cf. M. L. West, *The Hesiodic Catalogue of Women* (Oxford, 1985) 31–50; while large tracts of heroic epic lacked 'incredible events' (*apista*) of the kind certain fourth-century writers sought to eliminate.

11. See U. Kron, *Die zehn attischen Phylenheroen* (Berlin, 1976) 106, for references to studies, above all by F. Jacoby, on this complex topic.

12. West, *Hesiodic Catalogue*, 103–9, argues for an extensive Attic section in that work (and for Attic origin, 168–71); and there were numerous Attic myths in the mythographic work of the Athenian Pherecydes, of perhaps the second quarter of the fifth century (*FGrH* 3: see F 2, 34, 53, 84, 116, 120, 144–55), though we do not know how they were arranged.

13. Ares' trial at the Areopagus is left out, though it falls in the period covered, because it needs to be discussed along with the other aetia for Attic courts, which do not. Cf. Hellanicus, *FGrH* 323a F 1, with Jacoby.

14. There is a brilliant sketch of Athenian mythology by N. Loreaux, s.v. 'Cit  grecque' in Y. Bonnefoy (ed.), *Dictionnaire des mythologies et des religions des soci t s traditionnelles et du monde antique* (Paris, 1981) 203–9; to this I am much indebted. For comprehensive accounts one must go back to J. E. Harrison in Harrison and M. de G. Verrall, *Mythology and Monuments of Ancient Athens* (London, 1890) i-clvi, and Robert, *Heldensage*, 135–74, 676–756, though much of the ground is covered in Kron's excellent *Phylenheroen*. E. Kearns, *Some Studies in the Significance of Attic Hero-cult in the Archaic and Classical Periods* (Diss., Oxford 1983: forthcoming), contains a chapter on 'Heroic Mythology'. The myths of the Acropolis are briefly surveyed in R. J. Hopper, *The Acropolis* (London, 1971) Ch. 2; on political aspects see M. P. Nilsson, *Cults, Myths, Oracles and Politics in Ancient Greece* (Lund, 1951) 49–64.

15. For bibliography see M. L. West's note on Hes. *Theog.* 886–900; E. H. Loeb, *Die Geburt der G tter in der griechischen Kunst* (Jerusalem, 1979) 197 n 8; add Burkert, *GR*, 142–3; H. Cassimatis in *LIMC* III.1 s.v. *Athena*, 985–90 (citing the sources), 1021–3; K. Schefold, *G tter und Heldensagen der Griechen in der sp tarchaischen Kunst* (Munich, 1978) 12–20; idem, *Die G ttersage in der klassischen und hellenistischen Kunst* (Munich, 1981) 19–23; F. T. v. Straten, *Lampas*, 17 (1984) 162–83.

16. Athena as friendly helper: see P. Friedrich, *The Meaning of Aphrodite* (Chicago, 1978) 83; *LIMC* III.1 s.v. *Athena*, 1026f. Head as 'self': see R. B. Onians, *The Origins of European Thought* (Cambridge, 1951) 96–102; J. Bremmer, *The Early Greek Concept of the Soul* (Princeton, 1983) 16f. Athena and Zeus: cf. C. J. Herington, in G. T. W. Hooker (ed.), *Parthenos and Parthenon (Greece and Rome suppl., 1963)* 61–73; N. Loraux, *Les Enfants d'Ath na* (Paris, 1981), 141–5.

17. Though they did not invent it: see, e.g., numbers 361–2 of the catalogue in *LIMC* s.v. *Athena*.

18. Cf. M. Detienne and J.-P. Vernant, *Cunning Intelligence in Greek Culture and Society*, tr. J. Lloyd (Hassocks, 1978) Ch. 4; and on asexual generation M. Detienne, *Traverses* 5–6 (1976) 75–81.

19. Cf. G. E. R. Lloyd, *Science, Folklore and Ideology* (Cambridge, 1983) 86–105.

20. Cf. the superiority claimed for Aphrodite Ouranos as being 'motherless' and 'having no share of the female' in Pl. *Symp.* 180d–181d.

21. See especially F. Brommer, 'Die Geburt der Athena', *Jahrb. romisch-germ. Zentralmus. Mainz*, 8 (1961), 66–83.

22. On this concept cf. F. Dirlmeier, *Philologus*, 90 (1935) 57–77, 176–93; A. W. H. Adkins, *JHS*, 92 (1972) 11–17; J. Griffin, *Homer on Life and Death* (Oxford, 1980) 85–8.

23. See F. Vian, *La Guerre des géants* (Paris, 1952); P. Demargne in *LIMC* III. s.v. *Athena*, 990–2. No early connected account survives: for the literary allusions see Vian, 2 n 2.

24. E.g. Soph. fr. 24.6–8 (Pallantids), Arist. fr. 637 (Panathenaea commemorate Asterios): cf. M. Mayer, *Die Giganten und Titanen in der antiken Sage und Kunst* (Berlin, 1887) 182–93; Vian, *Guerre*, 261–4, 272–7.

25. Panathenaic robe: Eur. *Hec.* 466–74, *IT* 222–4, Vian, *Guerre*, 251. Its symbolic importance: e.g. Ar. *Eq.* 566. *Hybris* punished: e.g. Bacch. 15.62–3, Pind. *Pyth.* 8.12–18. Panathenaea: Vian, *Guerre*, 259. Vian argues, 246–53, that the Gigantomachy was evoked or imitated at several stages in the ritual of the Panathenaea: Nilsson in his review, *Gnomon*, 25 (1953) 5–9, is (perhaps unduly) sceptical.

26. Victory: cf. F. W. Hamdorf, *Griechische Kultpersonifikationen der vorhellenistischen Zeit* (Mainz, 1964) 58–62. Symbolism in Hellenistic period: see, e.g., Paus. 1.25.2, Callim. *Del.* 174. For the classical period Vian, *Guerre*, 288 is sceptical, E. Thomas, *Mythos und Geschichte* (Cologne, 1976) 40ff, receptive. On Pind. *Pyth.* 8.12–18 see most recently M. W. Dickie in D. E. Gerber (ed.), *Studies in Honour of Leonard Woodbury* (Chico, Calif., 1984) 83–109, who disputes the political reading.

27. See, e.g., Thuc. 2.15.1. On the shadowy kings before Cecrops see Jacoby on Philochorus, *FGrH* 328 F 92; on Cecrops, Kron, *Phylenheroen*, 84–103.

28. See Kron, *Phylenheroen*, 90–2, 55–67; on representations of the birth see too C. Bérard, *Anodoi* (Rome, 1974) 34–8; Loeb, *Geburt der Götter*, 165–81. In literature: Eur. *Ion* 20–6, 267–74, 999–1005, 1427–9.

29. So Loraux, *Enfants d'Athéna*, 39.

30. Cf. Kron, *Phylenheroen*, 32–7. The passage is accepted as genuine, without discussion on this point, by G. S. Kirk in his commentary (Cambridge, 1985) ad loc.

31. So, e.g., Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.14.6, where see Frazer's note. The derivation of Erichthonius' name from wool, *erion*, and earth, *chthon*, is apparently not attested before the third century. Sixth century: on the Amyclaeon throne, Paus. 3.18.13 (though cf. the caveat of N. Robertson, *HSCP*, 87 (1983) 287–8).

32. Divine-child: so J. D. Mikalson, *Am. J. Phil.*, 97 (1976) 141–53. National origins: see above all N. Loraux, 'L'autochtonie: une topique athenienne', in her *Enfants d'Athéna*, 35–73 (from *Annales*, 1979). I am less convinced by her further argument (in 'Le nom athenien', *ibid.* 119–53) that the prominence in the myth of Athena, the motherless child, means that this myth too emphasises 'la dominance de la part paternelle' (146). 'Cecropids': see Robert, *Heldensage*, 138 n 7, and lexica to Sophocles and Euripides s.v. *Erechtheidai*. Descent is claimed explicitly, beyond what the patronymic implies, in, e.g., Soph. *Aj.* 202, and in passages referring to the Athenians' divine ancestors, cf. Eur. *Med.* 825 with Page's note.

33. Cf. note 22 above.

34. Cf. the interesting speculations of H. Jeanmaire on the influence of artisans on myth-making, *Rev. Arch.*, 48 (1956) 27–39. On the close relations in Athenian cult between Athena and Hephaestus see the references of Loraux, *Enfants d'Athéna*, 135f, and cf. n 17 above; Loraux emphasises, p. 132, that the Athenians seem to have played down their descent from Hephaestus, which is explicitly mentioned only in Aesch. *Eum.* 13.

35. See the texts cited in R. Stupperich, *Staatsbegräbnis und Privatgrabmal im klassischen Athen* (Diss. Münster, 1977) ii, 33, n 4 to p. 42; and cf. Loraux, 'Cité grecque' (note 14 above). It is not clear whether the famous Attic/Ionic cicada brooches were a 'symbol of autochthony' (the cicada too being earth-born) for their wearers, as they certainly were for commentators later in antiquity (cf. A. B. Cook, *Zeus*, iii, Cambridge, 1940, 250 n 8): cf. R. L. Hunter's commentary (Cambridge, 1983) on Eubulus fr. 10, the only relevant classical allusion (also discussed by R. B. Egan, *CQ*, 79 (1985) 523–5).

36. Dem. 60.4; Lys. 2.17; Pl. *Menex.* 239a. In a different context, special obligations to a mother are emphasised: Eur. *Heracl.* 826–7, Pl. *Resp.* 414d–e.

37. So, e.g., Paus. 1.18.2, Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.14.6. A different tradition in Amelesagoras, *FGrH* 330 F 1 (cf. Jacoby ad loc. for related texts). See in general U. Kron in *LIMC* I. s.v. *Aglauros*, *Herse*, *Pandrosos*, 283–98.

38. Paus. 1.27.3; cf. W. Burkert, *Hermes*, 94 (1966) 1–25; E. Simon, *Festivals of Attica* (Wisconsin, 1983) 39–46; N. Robertson, *HSCP*, 87 (1983) 241–88, the last dissenting from the modern consensus that the descent was from the Acropolis.

39. Pandrosos: Paus. 1.27.2. Aglauros: G. S. Dontas, *Hesperia*, 52 (1983) 48–63. Pfeiffer argues (on Callim. fr. 238.11) that Euphorion (fr. 9.4 Powell) located the leap on the southwest side of the acropolis, some way therefore from the Aglaurion, which as we now know was on the east; but it is unclear what Euphorion meant by *Glaukopion* (perhaps the Acropolis itself). Cecrops and, of course, Erechtheus also had Acropolis precincts.

40. The snake: see J. G. Frazer on Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.14.6 (though note that Erichthonius/Erechtheus is not himself anguiform in early sources). On snakes and children see Burkert, *Hermes* (1966), 15 n 4, and for the 'guardian' snake Soph. *Phil.* 1328. The vase (a pyxis of the late fifth century): *Archaeological Reports*

1984–5; 9; cf. N. Robertson's theory, *HSCP* (1983), esp. 259, 276, that the Arrephoria related to a talisman of Athens' safety. The vase is said to offer the form Eruchthonios: probably a slip, but one thinks of *eruechthon*, 'save-land' (a sense argued for Erysichthon by N. Robertson, *Am. J. Phil.*, 105 (1984) 388).

41. On their relation see N. J. Richardson, *The Homeric Hymn to Demeter* (Oxford, 1974), 234–5.

42. Schol. Dem. 19. 303 = Philochorus *FGrH* 328 F 105; cf. R. Merkelbach, *ZPE*, 9 (1972) 277–83. The alteration creates acute chronological difficulties (cf. Jacoby, ad loc), which make it uncertain how much of the scholion derives from Philochorus.

43. Aglaurus was mother by Ares of Alcippe, Hellanicus *FGrH* 323a F 1, Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.14.2; the tradition derives from her close association with Ares via the ephebes. Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.14.3 unusually makes Cephaeus a child of Hermes and Herse. In their main legend, of course, both girls die as virgins.

44. See Androton *FGrH* 324 F 1, with Jacoby, and for possible representations in fifth-century art, Kron in *LIMC* I.1. 297. Complex story: first in Callimachus, see A. Henrichs, *Cronache Ercolanesi*, 13 (1983) 33–43.

45. See on all this Philochorus, *FGrH* 328 F 94–8, with Jacoby; S. Eitrem in *RE* 11 (1922) 123; A. Brelich, *Gli eroi greci* (Rome, 1958) 172; S. Pembroke, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 30 (1967) 30–1 (on marriage). Before Philochorus I know only Xen. *Mem.* 3.5.10 (vague), and PClearchus fr. 63 Wehrli (but how much is really Clearchus?); but cf. U. Kron in *LIMC* I.1, 297, on her no. 29 (speculative).

46. Cf. E. Simon in *Tainia*, *Festschrift R. Hampe* (Mainz, 1980) 239–55; J. Binder in *Studies Presented to Sterling Dow* (*GRBS Monographs* 10, 1984) 15–22.

47. The Leningrad hydria, *LIMC* III, 996, no. 453. Or is this the witness Cecrops (cf. Callim. fr. 260.26)?

48. As judge?: Parthenon pediment; Xen. *Mem.* 3.5.10; Callim. fr. 194.66–8; rejected variant in Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.14.1; as witness, Callim. fr. 260.25–6, Apollod. loc cit.

49. So first C. Robert, *Hermes*, 69 (1881) 60–87; cf. L. Preller and C. Robert, *Griechische Mythologie* 4th edn (Berlin, 1887) 203 n 1 for his subsequent controversy with E. Petersen, and now J. Binder in *Dow Studies*. The key texts in support of Robert are Hdt. 8.55, Isocr. *Panath.* 193, Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.14.1, and schol. Ael. Arist. vol. 3 Dindorf, 58.25–7.

50. Cf. respectively Robert, *Hermes* (1881) 65–6; Simon, in *Tainia*, 245–8, the latter supported by a recent find said to show a thunderbolt between Athena and Poseidon; cf. R. Lindner, *Jdl*, 97 (1982) 385 n 250. Neither point is found in literary sources, and Poseidon's gesture on the Leningrad hydria (above, note 47) is not necessarily one of attack. But Poseidon's son Halirrhothius certainly attacked the sacred olives in resentment at the verdict (schol. Ar. *Nub.* 1005).

51. Of course, a version with Cecrops as judge rather than witness might have contained different grounds for the verdict. Robert suggests a simple preference on Cecrops' part for Athena. In Hesych. s.v. *Dios thakoi*, Athena wins by promising Zeus, one of the judges, special privileges on the Acropolis.

52. Anger of Poseidon also in the delightful but undatable version of Varro *ap.* Augustin. *De Civ. D.* 18.9 (cf. schol. Ael. Aristid. vol. 3 Dindorf, 60.5–12): the Athenians *en masse* are the jury; the women, who are enfranchised at this date, all vote for Athena; angry Poseidon deprives them of the vote, decrees that no child shall be known by his mother's name, and forbids the women to be called 'Athenaeae' (i.e. citizens). Cf. Loraux, *Enfants d'Athènes*, 121f.

53. Cf. M. Detienne, *Rev. Hist. Rel.*, 178(1970) 5–11, reprinted in M. I. Finley (ed.), *Problèmes de la terre en Grèce ancienne* (Paris, 1973) 293–7.

54. For Poseidon see Plut. *Qu. Conv.* 741a (and the Loeb notes, ad loc), where some five instances are cited; E. Wüst in *RE* 22 (1953) 460–1. For Hephaestus see Simonides 552; cf. *RE* 8(1913) 322–3. For criticism of historical interpretations of these Poseidon myths see Pembroke, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 30(1967), 25–6.

55. J. Binder, in *Dow Studies*, 15–22, developing a suggestion of L. H. Jeffery that the Acropolis cult of Erechtheus only became a cult of Poseidon-Erechtheus at about that time. On the latter point, is such a transmutation of a venerable cult plausible at this date? Would not the Athenians have preferred another way of introducing Poseidon to the Acropolis, rather than the archaic-sounding assimilation? And what justified the assimilation? (Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood, in conversation.) As for the myth, its antiquity was already doubted by Harrison, *Mythology and Monuments*, xxvi, who noted its absence from earlier art; it first appears on the Parthenon and in Hdt. 8.55, and is implied in Eur. *Erechtheus* (see below, note 64).

56. But note that he remains an enemy in Eur. *Erechtheus* (below), and his son Halirrhothius is in Attic myth an anarchic figure (cf. *RE* 7, 1912, 2268–70).

57. Cf. Phanodemus, *FGrH* 325 F 2, with Jacoby's commentary. For the interest of the Erysichthonidae in Delos (source of Phanodemus' conception, or a consequence?), see N. Robertson, *Am. J. Phil.*, 105(1984) 385–7. For Erysichthon as judge in the trial of Athena and Poseidon, see Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.14.1; on possible representations in art see Kron, *Phylenheroen*, 69, 93, 97. The eponym of the Erysichthonidae was

originally perhaps another Erychthion, the hungry father of Mestra, revealed as an Athenian by Hes. fr. 43a 2–69, esp. 66–9: cf. Robertson, op. cit. 388–95.

58. Aesch. *Eum.* 1011, cf. Robert, *Heldensage*, 150; Paus. 1.14.3 = Choerilus *TGrF* 2 F 1. On these kings see Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.14.5–6; but Isocr. *Panath.* 126 still has Erichthonius succeed directly to Cecrops.

59. Cf. West, *Hesiodic Catalogue*, 106–7, 133.

60. Erichthonius is first certainly so named, apparently, on the kylix of the Codrus painter, c. 440/30, Berlin (West) F 2537, Beazley, *ARV* 1268, 2, Kron, *Phylenheroen*, 250, E 5. The same vase also names a distinct Erechtheus; for their relationship see Eur. *Ion* 267–8 (where the exact sense of *progonospater*, is, perhaps deliberately, unclear.) Earlier references to Erichthonius are either not verbatim (*Danaï* fr. 2 Kinkel, Pindar fr. 253), or may refer to someone else (Sophocles fr. 242.1). The fullest discussion is by Ermatinger, *Autochthonensage*, 37–62; cf. Kron, *Phylenheroen*, 37–9.

61. Single figure: so, e.g., Burkert, *Hermes* 1966, 24 n 2; cf. Kron, *Phylenheroen*, 38 n 129. Assimilation followed by re-design of two distinct figures with similar names is perhaps more plausible.

62. First in Hellanicus, *FGH* 323a F 2; cf. Burkert, *Hermes* (1966), 23 n 1, and for possible earlier representations Kron, *Phylenheroen*, 75f. Originally perhaps Erechtheus founded the festival.

63. Cf. Stupperich, *Staatsbegräbnis*, 42–8; N. Loraux, *L'Invention d'Athènes* (Paris, 1981) 133–56; W. Blake Tyrrell, *Amazons* (Baltimore and London, 1984) 13–19, 114–17. The other labours were the repulse of the Amazon invasion, and the wars in support of the Heraklidae and the relatives of the Seven against Thebes.

64. See C. Austin, *Nova Fragmenta Euripidea* (Berlin, 1968) 22–40, H.J. Mette, *Lustrum*, 23–4(1981–2) 117–24. *Erechtheus* is conventionally dated to c. 421 on the basis of Plut. *Nie.* 9.7, a shaky foundation (as Dr C. B. R. Pelling kindly confirms; cf. *JHS*, 100(1980) 127–40, esp. 127–9). The dating from Plutarch is challenged by M. Cropp and G. Fick, *Resolutions and Chronology in Euripides* (*BICS* Supplement 43, 1985) 79f; they favour 421–410. Chione's Athenian mother: Orithyia (Apollod. 3.15.2), which means that Eumolpus' opponent Erechtheus is his own great-grandfather. From this incongruity Ermatinger, *Autochthonensage*, 83, concludes that the association Orithyia-Chione must be post-Euripidean, R. M. Simms, *GRBS*, 24 (1983) 197–208 less plausibly that Eumolpus originally fought not Erechtheus but Theseus. But perhaps in relation to the Orithyia-Chione-Eumolpus stemma Orithyia was primarily envisaged as an 'Athenian princess in Thrace' rather than a 'daughter of Erechtheus', so that the incongruity was not felt. Eumolpus' early adventures: Apollod. 3.15.4. Some of this is Euripidean (cf. fr. 39 Austin, with Richardson on *Hymn. Hom. Dem.* 154), but was there scope in a prologue for the whole of Apollodorus' elaborate account? (pace Robert, *Heldensage*, 171).

65. Cf. J. Schmitt, *Freiwilliger Opfertod bei Euripides* (Berlin, 1921), and on maiden sacrifice Burkert, *HN*, 58–72. Later allusions: see Austin, *Nova Fragmenta Euripidea*, 22–3.

66. War: Thuc. 2.15 (and cf. the bronze perhaps by Myron, Paus. 1.27.4, cf. 9.30.1, Robert, *Heldensage*, 141 n 3). Maiden-sacrifice and death of Erechtheus: Eur. *Ion* 277–82. On the pre-existence of these traditions see Ermatinger, *Autochthonensage*, 75–89. In Eur. *Erechth.* and elsewhere (Dem. 60.27, Philochorus *FGH* 328 F 12) the daughters of Erechtheus are identified with the (Parthenoi) Hyacinthides, who received cult at 'Hyacinth hill' probably west of Athens (cf. Phanodemus *FGH* 325 F 4 with Jacoby, *RE* 9, 1916, 2–3); but in Apollod. *Bibl.* 3. 15.8 the Hyacinthids are sacrificed to stay famine and plague caused by Minos' curse. Evidently the floating motif of maiden-sacrifice was liable to become attached to any cult-group of maidens, and various attempts could then be made to associate them with a particular war or crisis. The motif could also of course attach itself to a particular king and so to his (hitherto non-existent) daughters; since such daughters would not receive cult, there was then a pressure to assimilate them to a cult-group. Euripides' further assimilation of Erechtheids to Hyades (schol. Arat. 172, fr. 65.107 Austin) is unexplained.

67. Cf. the discussions cited in Schol. Soph. *OC* 1053; F. Jacoby, *Das Marmor Parium* (Berlin, 1904) 72–5.

68. So F. Hiller v. Gärtringen, *De Graecorum Jabulis ad Thracas pertinentibus* (Berlin, 1886) 33; J. Töpffer, *Attische Genealogie* (Berlin, 1889) 37. Orpheus as founder of the Mysteries: first in (Eur.) *Rhes.* 943f, cf. F. Graf, *Eleusis und die orphische Dichtung Athens* (Berlin, 1974) 23–39; Graf, this volume, Ch. 5, section 9. A terminus *post quern* for Eumolpus' change cannot be established: it is not decisive (given the possibility that divergent versions can co-exist) that he is still Greek and peaceable on the well-known skyphos of the Macron painter (Brit. Mus. E 140, Beazley, *ARV* 459.3) and probably in Pindar fr. 346 (cf. H. Lloyd-Jones, *Maia*, 19 (1967) 206–229: this could in theory be Eumolpus junior.) On Eumolpus in art see L. Weidauer, *Arch. Anz.* (1985) 195–210.

69. Paus. 1.5.2, 27.4, 38.3, as interpreted by Töpffer, *Attische Genealogie*, 40–4: cf. Jacoby, commentary on *FGH* 328 F 13, p. 284 and (sceptical, not unreasonably) Ermatinger, *Autochthonensage*, 79–84.

70. See R. A. Padgug, *GRBS*, 13 (1972) 135–50.

71. Cf. Burkert, *HN*, 143–9.

72. Cf. E. Frank in *RE* 18 (1942) 951.

73. On all this see E. Simon, *Antike und Abendland*, 13 (1967) 101–26; on the artistic evidence also Schefold, *Göttersage* (1981), 318–22, with his references. The myth first appears, in a surprising non-Attic context, on the chest of Cypselus, if Pausanias' controversial identification (5.19.1) is correct. Otherwise it emerges in Attica c. 490.

74. On this temple see J. S. Boersma, *Athenian Building Policy from 561/0 to 405/4 B.C.* (Groningen, 1970) 171.

75. On Orithyia's further daughter Chione see above, note 64.

76. P. Turner 1 = Hesiod fr. 10a 20–23, ed. Solmsen-Merkelbach-West, *Fragmenta Hesiodica*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1983) 227. On Ion I have found most useful E. Meyer, *Forschungen zur Alten Geschichte*, 1 (Halle, 1892) 127–50, esp. 144–50; Robert, *Heldensage*, 145–9; see too Ermatinger, *Autochthonensage*, 112–42; U.v. Wilamowitz, edition of Eur. *Ion* (Berlin, 1926) 1–10; and on the myths relating to the colonisation of Ionia as a whole (including those of Codrus and the Neleids), F. Prinz, *Gründungsmythen und Sagenchronologie* (Munich, 1979) 314–76.

77. Strabo 8.7.1, Paus. 7.1, etc.; cf. Robert, *Heldensage*, 147 n 1. This is probably Ephoran tradition. The co-existence of Athenian and Achaean claims about the colonisation is clear from Hdt. 1.145–6.

78. See, e.g., C. Hignett, *A History of the Athenian Constitution* (Oxford, 1952) 50–5.

79. Hdt. 8.44; Eur. *Ion* 59–64 (the motif is transferred to Xuthus); Thuc. 1.3.2 (unnamed); Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 3.2 and fr. 1; Philochorus 328 *FGH* F 13 and the (?)Ephoran tradition (above, note 77). He was already associated with the Eleusinian campaign in Eur. *Erechtheus*, if fr. 53 is addressed to him (cf. Austin, *Nova Fragmenta Euripidea*, ad loc.). It is not clear in early sources whether Ion has been summoned from Achaia or e.g., Marathon, where according to later accounts (Pderiving from cult; cf. *IG* I (3rd edn) 255 A 13 with Jameson's note) Xuthus had settled (Strabo 8.7.1; Eur. *Melanippe Sapiens*, Prologue, 9–11 p. 26 v. Arnim, perhaps implies Attic residence).

80. *Ion*, *passim*. Robert argues that this is a Euripidean invention; others (Meyer, Ermatinger, Wilamowitz, above, note 76) emphasise Pl. *Euthyd.* 302c–d, where it is said that Apollo is worshipped as *Pairōs* at Athens 'because of the begetting of Ion'. Perhaps then Euripides' innovation was merely to introduce a local tradition into literature. But Plato might be following Euripides (other sources for Apollo's parenthood, the testimonia to Aristotle fr. 1, are dependent in their turn on Plato). Apollo's epithet is explicable without reference to Ion. Of Sophocles' *Ion* we know nothing.

81. Possibly also in *Erechtheus*: see above, note 79.

82. For propagation (?) of the cult of Ion in the empire note the Samian *horoi* of precincts of Ion from Athens', J. P. Barron, *JHS*, 84 (1964) 37; cf. R. Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire* (Oxford, 1972) 298. But one should not suppose that Ionians necessarily resisted the notion of their kinship with the Athenians: contrast, e.g., Thuc. 1.95.1. For Ion's cults in Attica see *IG* I (3rd edn) 383. 147–9, Paus. 1.31.3; there was another Attic Ion, too, Paus. 6.22.7. Ion scarcely appears in art, but for a possible illustration of Euripides' play see M. Schmidt in A. Cambitoglou (ed.), *Studies in Honour of Arthur Dale Trendall* (Sydney, 1979) 163–4.

83. I am very grateful to the editor of this volume for his encouragement, patience and helpful criticism.

Myth as History: The Previous Owners of the Delphic Oracle*

Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood

In memory of T. C. W. Stinton

Many Greek myths express important perceptions of the society that generated them and contain insights which are (or can be reinterpreted so as to become) significant for our own age; thus they can be said to be ‘true’ even today. But they are not ‘true’ narrative accounts of past events (though they present themselves in that guise) and they should not be taken at face value and assumed to contain descriptions of past realities – as they sometimes are. The myth I am discussing here (which claims that Apollo did not found the Delphic oracle but took it over from an earlier goddess) has often been assumed to contain true information about the oracle’s early history. Moreover, this historical reading of the myth has functioned as an (implicit) perceptual filter shaping many scholars’ interpretation of reality, that is, of the surviving information pertaining to the oracle’s early history. My purpose is to show that the Previous Owners myth does not reflect cultic history but expresses certain important perceptions about the Delphic Apollo, the oracle and the cosmos. First I will deconstruct the argument in favour of the historicity of the myth and show that it depends on a series of hidden, mutually supporting, *a priori*, and sometimes demonstrably wrong, assumptions and that it is fallacious. In the second part I will analyse the myth and show that, while it cannot be cultic history, it makes perfect sense as a myth, articulating perceptions also known to us from other sources.

A variety of deities are named as Previous Owners in the different variants, but all versions include Gaia or Themis, or both.¹ Many scholars² believe that this story reflects a memory of a time in which Gaia and/or Themis were the oracular divinities at Delphi, dispossessed by Apollo – who did not evict them altogether but allowed them to maintain a cult of secondary importance in the Delphic sanctuary. As we shall see,³ the only ‘evidence’ for the view that these goddesses had preceded Apollo as oracular deities at Delphi is the existence of the myth – which can only be considered to be ‘evidence’ if it is assumed that

the most reasonable interpretation of such a myth is that it reflects historical reality. This is an unwarranted – and fallacious – *a priori* assumption which, I shall show, lies at the core of the orthodox discourse's hidden circularity; it is the product of an implicit, rationalising, euhemeristic reading of myth, which, once explicitly set out, would be supported by few. For myths are not translations of events into mythological language, which scholars can translate back into history. The myths of resistance to Dionysos' cult, for example, are not, as some had imagined, reflections of a historical conflict; they articulate, and are articulated by, religious realities such as ritual tensions and symbolic oppositions.⁴ Since myths are structured by, and express, the (religious, social and intellectual) realities and mental representations of the societies that produced or recast them,⁵ any echoes of cultic history that may have gone into the making of a particular myth are radically reshaped and adapted, by a process of *bricolage*, to fit the 'needs', the 'spaces', created by the mythological schemata structuring that myth, which express, and are shaped by, those realities and representations.⁶ Thus, the hypothesis that our myth is a reversible translation of history is invalidated. In any case, even if we cannot conclusively *prove* the fallaciousness of the assumption that the most reasonable interpretation of our myth is that it reflects historical reality, since that assumption is *a priori*, and thus culturally determined (by a rationalising mode of thought which privileges 'positivist' interpretations), and since it cannot be shown to be right, it must not be allowed to form the hidden centre of a discourse the validity of which depends on that assumption's validity. Given that alternative interpretations of the emergence and significance of the myth are possible – not to say more convincing – it is illegitimate to assume the myth's historicity and base the validity of the whole case on that. In fact, the myth's pattern of appearance offers a serious objection to the historical interpretation. For the two earliest accounts of the early history of the oracle, in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*⁷ and Alkaios' *Hymn to Apollo*,⁸ contradict the Previous Owners myth and present Apollo as the founder and first owner of the Delphic oracle.⁹ Thus, the presumption must be – especially since the two hymns originated in different religious environments, and the Pythian part of the Homeric hymn reflected the Delphic priesthood's theology – that 'Apollo's foundation of the oracle' was the early cultic myth on the oracle's origins, and that the Previous Owners story was invented at a later stage – unless some contrary evidence can be adduced, which, we shall see, it cannot. The data, when investigated in their own right, cannot support the historicity of the myth. They can only appear to support it when, in the context of attempts to validate that historicity, they are structured and questioned by means of conceptual schemata dependent on the very hypothesis that is being tested – a circular procedure leading to corrupted, and thus wrong, conclusions.

To eliminate bias, these data must be investigated through a neutral methodology which excludes prior assumptions. One strategy conducive to neutrality is to investigate each of the relevant grids of evidence

(archaeological, cultic, mythological) separately and independently, to keep the deconstructive and the mythological analyses separate, and to compare the results of these independent investigations only at a later stage. This will prevent the common fallacy of combining elements from different grids, taken out of their proper context, to make up an apparently coherent case which is in fact radically flawed by hidden circularity. In addition, the proposed strategy allows cross-checks between grids, which can provide controls and, if appropriate, confirmations. A rigorous methodology also demands that the data should be studied in the context of the wider nexuses to which each particular set belongs (e.g. Mycenaean figurines, or divine succession myths); for only this context can help determine their meanings in the particular case that concerns us – and so protect the investigation from *a priori* bias.

A fundamental plank of the case for our myth's historicity is the alleged Mycenaean cult of Gaia. The gist of my argument is that, though there may have been a Mycenaean shrine at Delphi, its possible existence is irrelevant to the myth's historicity. For it is only if we assume that the myth creates an *a priori* case for the existence of a Gaia cult – an assumption which our investigation purports to examine – that Gaia can be considered at all in connection with the Mycenaean cult; thus the relevance of the latter to the former rests on a circular argument. But even if we grant that special pleading as a working hypothesis, the notion that the supposed Mycenaean cult provides support for the myth's historicity has to rely on a further series of unwarranted assumptions – and in the end it proves untenable. There had probably been a Mycenaean shrine at Delphi, perhaps at Marmaria, at the later sanctuary of Athena Pronaia,¹⁰ but not on the site of the temple of Apollo.¹¹ Since we know nothing about the deity or deities worshipped at this hypothetical Mycenaean shrine, the claim that it must have been an oracular shrine of Gaia is without foundation, wild. The female figurines (n 10) may have come from a shrine, but they do not show that that shrine's divinity was female. For almost all Mycenaean figurines are female; we do not know whom they represent.¹² But even if we knew that the chief deity of the hypothetical Mycenaean shrine had been a goddess, we would still know nothing about her. There is certainly no reason for thinking she was Gaia; for, we know from the Linear B tablets, the Mycenaeans had a genuinely polytheistic religion, with a hierarchically articulated pantheon¹³ – in which, incidentally, Gaia is not attested. Thus the notion that the hypothetical Mycenaean cult at Delphi can support the view that Gaia's cult had preceded Apollo's is based on a circular argument; for Gaia can only be considered as a possibility at all if we begin with the assumption that the myth creates a presumption that Gaia's cult preceded Apollo's, and then look for evidence that can be made to support it. On that (hidden) assumption of historicity depends another, which in turn implicitly supports the first: the assumption that, since the myth tells us that Gaia preceded Apollo at Delphi, this must be presumed to be correct unless conclusively disproved. Given that only very rarely can anything be

conclusively proved or disproved in early Greek religion, the fact that something as elusive as proving that a particular deity was not worshipped at a particular hypothetical Mycenaean shrine cannot be achieved has, obviously, no evidential value. And yet the orthodox discourse assumes implicitly that, failing conclusive proof against it, the view that Gaia preceded Apollo at Delphi stands.¹⁴ Since, we saw, the assumption at the centre of this argument (the myth's presumption of historicity) is fallacious, and in fact the myth's pattern of appearance suggests that it does not reflect historical reality, the whole case pertaining to the alleged Mycenaean cult of Gaia at Delphi and its relevance to our myth is clearly circular and resting on fallacies. The view that it is erroneous is strengthened by further arguments.

There is no cult activity at either Marmaria or the site of the temple of Apollo between the Mycenaean period and the late ninth century;¹⁵ this absence of continuity argues strongly against the view that the hypothetical shrine of Mycenaean Delphi can be connected with the Previous Owners myth. For the only thing that could (conceivably) have survived through the centuries in those circumstances is the mere memory of an earlier cult. Thus, the cultic discontinuity invalidates another nexus of arguments for the historical interpretation of the myth, the notion (which, we shall see, is also discredited on other grounds) that various elements in the cult of the Delphic Apollo are hang-overs from Gaia's. For if all that had survived from the hypothetical Mycenaean cult had been the memory that it had existed, Apollo's cult could not have inherited any cultic elements from it. Moreover, in so far as it is possible to assess scarce and dumb data of this kind, the evidence cannot support the notion that Gaia was the mistress of a Mycenaean oracle. We do not know whether Mycenaean oracles had existed, and if they had, what their diagnostic features would be. However, what we can see is that at Delphi, such Mycenaean elements as are capable of a religious interpretation are not of a type (or quantity) to suggest the presence of a cult-place in any way important or exceptional, anything other than an ordinary Mycenaean shrine. Given that the Pronaia deposit had been put together by seventh-century Greeks, who may, perhaps, be presumed to have selected the most impressive and unusual finds, and – to judge by the presence of the pottery – also a representative sample, I submit that this observation has more value than the usual *argumentum ex silentio*.

Now some more specific hypotheses connecting the hypothetical Mycenaean cult with the Previous Owners myth. Roux argues that, since Athena had been a Mycenaean goddess there is no reason to think that it was not she who had been worshipped at Marmaria in Mycenaean times.¹⁶ There are serious objections to this argument. First, *a-ta-na po-ti-ni-ja* does not mean, as Roux thinks, 'auguste Athena' but 'potnia (Mistress) of Atana (probably a toponym)'.¹⁷ Second,¹⁸ it is illegitimate – especially since *a-ta-na po-ti-ni-ja* may suggest a geographically circumscribed deity – to conclude that Athena had been worshipped at Mycenaean Marmaria because many

centuries later, and after a break in cult use, Athena's sanctuary was situated on the site where the Mycenaean shrine may have stood. Third, Athena is not a Previous Owner in the myth but, both in cult and myth, a collaborator and friend of Apollo.¹⁹ Consequently, even if we assume that there had been a Mycenaean cult of Athena at Marmaria, and further that the memory of it had lingered through the Dark Ages despite the break, the myth of the Previous Owners would still not be reflecting that cult. Thus this would be an argument against interpreting the myth of the Previous Owners in terms of a relationship between the cult of Apollo and the supposed Mycenaean cult. In Béquignon's view,²⁰ a Mycenaean Gaia shrine at Marmaria was replaced by Apollo's sanctuary. But even leaving aside all the objections to the historical interpretation, if (as this view presupposes) the memory of the cult had been preserved through the Dark Ages, the archaic sanctuary would have been dedicated to Gaia, not Athena. For Cassola²¹ divine names are not important, they allude to a female chthonic deity whose heir was Athena. But, we saw, there is no evidence whatsoever that the Mycenaean cult involved a female deity, let alone that she was chthonic. Two interdependent (implicit) assumptions sustain Cassola's argument – and all variations of this hypothesis. First, that the most plausible interpretation of the Previous Owners myth is that it reflected cultic reality. Second – implicitly supporting the first – an underlying evolutionary model which, though discredited as a serious account of the development of Greek religion, nevertheless still unconsciously informs many discourses: the model according to which Greek religion progressed from dark, chthonic (and female) deities to light and celestial ones²² – derived from, and sustained through, the misinterpretation of classical Greek symbolic articulations (mistaken for reflections of past events) in this and other myths. These underlying assumptions make the historical interpretation of the Previous Owners myth seem eminently logical, for it conforms with the expectations which it helped form.

Now Poseidon: it has been claimed that, since he is a Mycenaean god and husband of Gaia, his cult at Delphi must go back to the Mycenaean period; and that this provides an additional argument for the early Gaia cult, and thus the historicity of our myth,²³ one version of which (Paus. 10.5.6) says that Gaia and Poseidon had shared the oracle before Apollo. However, Gaia's Mycenaean existence, we saw, is phantomatic, and we do not know whether Poseidon had been worshipped in Mycenaean Delphi. Furthermore, the notion that Poseidon's name designates him as 'husband of the Earth' is very far from certain;²⁴ nor is there any mythological support for the notion that he was the Earth's husband.²⁵ In addition, Poseidon's consort in Mycenaean cult is *Po-si-da-e-ja* (PY Tn 316.4);²⁶ if the evidence of the Pylos tablets is to be used, as it is by Roux for Poseidon's importance in Mycenaean religion (see n 23), it should not be used selectively, and Posidaeja must not be ignored in favour of a phantomatic union with Gaia (who is unattested in the Mycenaean period), a union whose claim to existence at any period is highly dubious. Thus we are

left, once again, with a myth which, we shall see, makes perfect sense in its own mythological terms.

There is no evidence for a cult of Gaia and/or Themis at Delphi before the first half of the fifth century²⁷ – a period when its emergence should be seen as a response to the myth.²⁸ The case for an earlier cult of Gaia at Delphi runs as follows. We know from a fourth-century inscription and Plutarch's description that Gaia had a shrine south of the temple of Apollo.²⁹ After the temple's destruction at 548, its terrace was extended and a polygonal retaining wall built;³⁰ in the process several buildings were destroyed. Because the later shrine of Gaia was in this region, it is assumed by some that the area had belonged to Gaia before the rearrangement; on that view, the extension of the terrace of Apollo's temple encroached on Gaia's temenos and marked the god's final triumph.³¹ However, the assumption that the spatial organisation of the Delphic sanctuary did not change between the early sixth and the fourth centuries, a period during which drastic rearrangements of space have indisputably taken place, is extremely implausible – and again depends on the *a priori* conviction that, given the myth's existence, Gaia's cult must be old. For it is illegitimate to assume, in the case of a continuously growing and developing sanctuary, that the fact that a deity was worshipped in one place in the fourth century entails that she had been worshipped in the same place in the early sixth, especially since we do not know whether or not she had been worshipped in that sanctuary at all in that early period – indeed this is what we are trying to find out. The earliest evidence for a Gaia cult probably belongs to the Kastalia area.³²

Among the buildings buried under the new terrace is number xxviii,³³ about the function of which we know nothing. Its south-west angle is built against a rock, and at the foot of the rock there is a small spring. Because of its association with the rock, and especially with the spring, it has been suggested that xxviii was a building with some religious function rather than a treasury. This is probably right. But there is no justification for calling it a 'temple of Gaia'. This identification depends entirely on two preconceived – and fallacious – assumptions: first, that there must have been an early cult of Gaia because the myth says so; and second, that springs are associated with Gaia because in the context of certain modern perceptions of Apollo (which ignore his complexity and ambivalence and the development of his divine personality), the Apollo-springs association appears illogical, while the Gaia-springs one seems 'natural'.³⁴ Thus the data are forced into perverse explanatory patterns and linked by circular arguments, to produce interpretations which only appear convincing when viewed through the perceptual filters of the culturally determined expectations which generated them. The following facts show that the Gaia interpretation of building xxviii rests on a fallacious basis and is highly implausible. First, springs and water are connected with Apollo in his oracular function also in other important oracles, Didyma, Claros and Ptoion.³⁵ Second, at Delphi, in the period that

concerns us, c. 600, there were two fountains associated with the temple of Apollo, fountain 24 and a spring behind the opisthodomos.³⁶ It is thus perverse to assume (on no evidence) that spring 16³⁷ had a different significance and association, and decide that it belonged to Gaia, and then identify building xxviii as the temple of Gaia *because* it is associated with this spring. Third, xxviii's entrance is at its north side, that is, it opens up towards the temple of Apollo. It thus related spatially to the temple, which suggests that it was associated with the cult of Apollo and not with a different, rival, cult.

Moreover, even if – despite what the evidence suggests – there had been a cult of Gaia earlier than the fifth century, and earlier than the myth, this would not be evidence for the view that Gaia preceded Apollo as mistress of the oracle. For, since Delphi was an established Apolline oracle in the eighth century (see e.g. *Od.* 8.79–81), soon after the beginning of cult-activity in the sanctuary, there is no place for Gaia as mistress of the oracle from the late ninth century onwards. Consequently, since Gaia did not have an oracular cult at Delphi before that date, even if her cult had begun before the myth's creation, it would not be evidence for the myth's historicity. Myth and cult interact, myths using existing cultic and theological material to weave their tales through *bricolage*. If a Gaia cult had preceded the myth, this would only entail that the chronological order of myth and cult, the two articulations of symbolic reality, would be the reverse of the one I envisage here; it would not be evidence for the material existence of this symbolic reality, that is, for the myth's historicity.

The third part of the case in favour of Gaia's ownership of the oracle consists in the claim that some cultic elements – the chasm and pneuma, the laurel, the omphalos, and the altar of Poseidon, Gaia's husband – are incompatible with Apollo's personality and thus a legacy from Gaia's chthonic oracle.³⁸ Some scholars claim that the Pythia's sex and the inspirational element in the divination also make better sense as a legacy from a chthonic goddess.³⁹ These arguments are wrong. First, the long gap in the cult-use of the relevant sites and in archaeologically detectable cult activities precludes any continuity in oracular or other cult practices of the kind presupposed by them. Second, the notion of divine personality on which the above theory is based is fallacious. For it ignores the (empirically demonstrable) complexity and ambivalence of divine personalities and the fact that they develop in the course of time, and are defined through their relationships with the other deities of the pantheon to which they belong, and with the worshipping group and its (changing) needs.⁴⁰ Thus, the notion that the elements under consideration are 'un-Apolline' is simply a culturally determined judgement, the result of the fact that we have been looking at Apollo's personality and the oracle's early history through a series of distorting mirrors: partly through the perceptual filter of the classical Delphic Apollo's persona, which had developed in response to, and interaction with, the needs which the god had been called

upon to fulfil in the Greek world – and is not a good guide to the god's early profile; and partly through the filters created by our own constructs about his early history, which are based on culturally determined assumptions about, for example, what constitutes a logical connection between divine functions.⁴¹ The study of these elements' cultic history shows that they are not a legacy from Gaia's cult. Poseidon's marriage to Gaia, we saw, is almost certainly a mirage. The laurel is closely and widely associated with Apollo from an early date, and not simply as a result of Delphic influence; in some cults this important aspect of the god's persona is crystallised in his epithet Daphnephorus, Apollo defined as the carrier of the laurel – connected with the laurel from Tempe which had a central part in Delphic myth and ritual.⁴²

The chasm with the vapours is a Hellenistic invention, though some, probably small, symbolic, opening of the ground with a stomion is perhaps suggested by Aesch. *Cho.* 806–7.⁴³ Such a small (artificial) opening in the earth would relate the temple's space (which belongs to the human world and to culture) with the inside of the earth with its 'other worldly' symbolic connotations, and thus help put the prophesying Pythia in symbolic contact with the 'other world', situate her between this and the 'other' world, in an appropriate symbolic position for receiving prophetic inspiration from the god. In the classical period at least, the opening was not a vehicle of prophecy, nor was it connected with the myth of the discovery of the prophetic chasm, presented as the source of inspiration. For there are no classical references to such a role, and no sign representing, or signalling the presence of, the opening of the ground in the representation of the prophesying Themis (sitting on a tripod and holding a laurel-branch) on the cup Berlin 2538 (*ARV* 1269.5; *Para* 471; *Add* 177). More importantly, the notion that the 'chasm' was the source of inspiration presupposes the localisation of the consultation at one, unmovable, spot; recent research has led Amandry to doubt the established view that the fourth-century temple had been built over the repaired foundations of its predecessor, and to think that it may have been moved to the north of the earlier temple;⁴⁴ this would imply that the opening in the earth – assuming that it had existed at that time – was not a particular, special, prophetic chasm located at a particular spot in the adyton; and this fits my interpretation that this opening had simply a symbolic meaning – which was later reinterpreted. As for the Pythia, Apollo had a female seer also at Didyma, and he was associated with inspired divination also at other oracles; the (well-established) relationship between ecstatic prophetess and god appears to have Near Eastern antecedents.⁴⁵ Thus there can be no support for the view that the Pythia's sex and the inspirational element of her prophecy are incompatible with Apollo and must be Gaia's legacy.

The omphalos⁴⁶ resembles closely in both shape and associations a particular type of oval stone (an actual example has recently been found) represented on some Minoan glyptic scenes, in which *an oval stone as a cultic object*, decorated with *fillets*, is associated with *eagle-type birds* and a *young*

male god characterised by the *bow*. These scenes, together with some others, depict parts of a particular ritual which I examine elsewhere.⁴⁷ In my view, the young god involved in this ritual (after undergoing syncretism and change) contributed significantly to the Cretan component of the historical Apollo's personality. The omphalos, I believe, is one of the elements which Apollo's Cretan component contributed to the Delphic Apollo's persona; the Cretan component entered the Delphic cult (perhaps together with the title Delphinios), probably in the late eighth century, when there were contacts between Crete and Delphi,⁴⁸ and the growing Delphic cult and its god were developing in response to the needs they were fulfilling with increasing success, and crystallising into the main lines of the shape they were to have from then on. The stone's meanings in the Minoan ritual have similarities with, and may be the ultimate origin of (after reinterpretation and adaptation to fit a different cult nexus), some of the Delphic omphalos's meanings and associations: the eagles in one of its myths, and its funerary connotations – for that Minoan ritual involves death and renewal; it is also connected with hunting, and according to Burkert the omphalos pertains to the hunting ritual horizon, the category of ritual restoration.⁴⁹ Be that as it may, as Nilsson noted,⁵⁰ Apollo is the god most closely associated with cults involving stones in Greek religion; thus in any case the stone is anything but un-Apolline, and the notion that it is a legacy from Gaia is wrong.⁵¹

Now the mythological analysis. The myth's earliest-known variants belong to the fifth century. In Aesch. *Eum.* 1–8 the transfer of the oracle's ownership from Gaia to Themis to Phoebe to Apollo is friendly. In Pindar fr. 55 it is a violent event: Apollo seized the oracle by force, hence Gaia wanted him cast into Tartaros. In Eur. *Or.* 163–5 the Delphic tripod is referred to as Themis' tripod. (See the cup (of c. 440) with Themis sitting on the tripod; ARV 1269.5; *Para* 471; *Add* 177). In Eur. *Iphigenia in Tauris*, 1242–82 Apollo takes over the oracle from Themis by violence and faces Gaia's hostility. In Pind. fr. 55 we are only given the bare structure of the myth. No other figure, apart from Gaia and Apollo, seems to be involved.⁵² At this time, the Delphic Apollo is, above all, the (celestial, male) god who establishes order, a lawgiver, guide and purifier. Gaia⁵³ is a primordial female deity, involved with death, deceitful and threatening, dangerous, representing a stage in cosmic history in which vengeance and not regulated civilised law obtained. She has given birth to various creatures, pestering gods and men. She is also a positive nurturing figure, but when contrasted to Apollo, as in this succession-by-conflict schema, she drifts towards the negative pole. The theme 'Apollo replaces another deity as master of the oracle', common to all variants of our myth, is a version of the mythological schema 'divine succession', which is shaped by, and articulates, social, religious and intellectual realities and collective representations.⁵⁴ In the most potent of the established divine schemata, the Hesiodic *Theogony*, as in our myth, a god of the younger generation replaces an older deity. Like the primordial goddesses in the *Theogony*, Gaia is integrated into the new order in

a subordinate position. Thus, the Pindaric myth is a sovereignty myth⁵⁵ in which the establishment of order is preceded by disorder and followed by the integration of the primordial powers in the new order. Gaia's revenge, also found in the *Theogony*, depends on the fact that she represents a cosmic era in which vengeance, and not regulated civilised law, obtained. The Gaia-Apollo relationship has several meanings in this myth.⁵⁶ First, through the defeat of the female primordial goddess by Apollo the lawgiver and establisher of order, the triumph of law and order and the Delphic oracle's contribution to it are articulated. Second, this relationship expresses the two deities' complementarity. Gaia's chthonic – including her prophetic – powers are harnessed in the service of Apollo; this is the meaning of the mytheme, and the corresponding cultic reality, 'Gaia's cult continues in a subordinate place at Delphi.' The Gaia-Apollo relationship also articulates certain perceptions pertaining to prophecy which we shall discuss below.

This myth is structured by, and expresses, the perception that at Delphi the chthonic, dangerous and disorderly aspects of the cosmos have been defeated by, and subordinated to, the celestial guide and lawgiver. Apollo's oracle has tamed the darker side of the cosmos – both at the theological (Gaia's defeat) and at the human level: it gives men divine guidance through which they can cope with that dark side of the cosmos. A comparable perception is expressed in the motif 'killing the baneful dragon' in 'Apollo's foundation of the oracle' in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*.⁵⁷ The motif 'god or hero kills a chthonic monster' is connected with a foundation also in other myths.⁵⁸ It represents the establishment of order and the elimination of disorder, evil and danger to humanity, symbolised by a chthonic monster, a representation of raw nature at its most frightening and savage. Thus the dragon-killing in the *Homeric Hymn* expresses in symbolic terms the significance of the oracle's foundation: Apollo founded it in order to guide mankind, to give laws and establish order. Consequently, the mythological representation 'Apollo defeats the chthonic monster and integrates some of its aspects in his cult',⁵⁹ contained in the Previous Owners myth, appears in connection with Apollo's oracle already in the *Homeric Hymn*. Moreover, in that hymn, through the dragoness's association with Typhoeus, the last challenger to Zeus's power, the disorder and chaos preceding the oracle's foundation which she represented are symbolically equated with the conditions preceding, and opposed to, the establishment of Zeus' rule. Thus Apollo's killing of the dragon and founding of the Delphic oracle are represented as corresponding symbolically to the establishment of Zeus' reign. The dragon-killing is also a 'replay' of that struggle and victory, which ensured that Zeus' order will be served by the oracle.

The Previous Owners myth contains the same symbolic equivalence between Apollo's oracle and Zeus' rule. This equation is earlier than the *Homeric Hymn*. For the mytheme 'Zeus set up the sema of his assumption of sovereignty at Delphi' (Appendix) established a direct association between

Delphi and Zeus' triumph over the old order; this was underpinned and strengthened by, and perhaps elaborated under the impetus of, Delphi's central role in promoting order in the Greek world, with Zeus as its ultimate guarantor. It is probably in the context of this elaboration that the 'dragon-killing' motif of the foundation legends was adapted so as to connect the monster with Zeus' enemies. Because it was a monster, it was connected with another monster among Zeus' enemies, Typhoeus; because it was associated with raw nature and, like all challengers to Zeus' rule and their allies, thought of in terms of the earlier gods, it was partly modelled on Gaia, presented as a savage transformation of Gaia: a dangerous death-bringing female monster and (like Gaia) a *kourotrophos* – of the plague Typhoeus (*Hom. H. Ap.* 353–5). In the Previous Owners myth the earlier order is represented by the older goddesses themselves, so the 'dragon-killing' motif was reinterpreted: the dragon – modelled on the motif 'serpent/dragon as guardian of a spring/sanctuary'⁶⁰ – became the guardian of Gaia's oracle, thus making explicit the symbolic equivalence 'Apollo kills the dragon' = 'Apollo takes over the oracle from Gaia by force'; for the violent takeover is focused on the killing of the oracle's guardian dragon.⁶¹ While in the *Homeric Hymn*, Apollo creates order out of chaos, in the Gaia myth he establishes a higher type of order, which supersedes that of the primordial goddess. Its symbolic equivalence with the order of Zeus' reign articulates the view that the Delphic oracle has a central role in establishing that order among men.

The fact that the myth 'Gaia as a Previous Owner' contains formal elaborations of motifs and notions which appear in a simpler (and wilder) form in the *Homeric Hymn's* dragon-killing, and is itself a more elaborate, acculturated, version of that myth, offers support for the presumption, enunciated earlier on, that the Previous Owners myth was later than 'Apollo's foundation of the oracle'.

In Euripides' *IT*, 1234–83 Apollo took over Themis' oracle after killing the dragon who guarded it; to avenge her daughter, Gaia sent prophetic night dreams which made Apollo's oracle redundant; Zeus, whose help Apollo sought, removed the night dreams' truthfulness and restored men's confidence in Apollo's prophecies. The revenge and the Apollo-Gaia conflict are also found in Pindar; in *IT* the oracle's owner is Themis, who, though a primordial goddess and Gaia's daughter, is associated with Zeus' order⁶² and with Apollo – in myth (*Hom. H. Ap.* 123–5) and personality. Themis, then, was a symbolically mediating figure between Apollo and Gaia. In one variant the oracle passes from Gaia to Themis to Apollo.⁶³ Its transfer from Gaia to Themis is a transfer from a primordial and often savage goddess to one associated with order and justice; that from Themis to Apollo a transfer to the male (and thus symbolically superior) lawgiving and civilising god of the new order. When contrasted to Apollo, Themis drifts towards her primordial female, older goddess aspect;⁶⁴ thus Apollo's ownership is symbolically correlative with the establishment of Zeus' rule.

Given the symbolic correlation between Apollo's Delphi and Zeus' rule (seen already in the *Homeric Hymn*), Gaia's possession of Delphi after Zeus became sovereign was symbolically unsatisfactory (at that point Apollo had not been born, and so could not step in). Thus, when the oracle acquired a pre-Apolline past, the myth created a 'space' for an intermediate figure, defined by the traits (a) 'older goddess somehow associated with Gaia' (for the structuring schema was 'Apollo replaces and older goddess', and its established form involved Gaia), and (b) 'figure associated with values pertaining to Zeus' order'. This space corresponds to Themis' persona, and, in my view, it is in this context that she became a Previous Owner of the Delphic oracle.⁶⁵ This variant stresses the oracle's close association with Apollo and Zeus, and its high claims to justice and order, and thus also its important role in establishing them. In some ways, 'Themis' ownership' can be seen as an elaboration of the formulation in Alcaeus' hymn '*prophēteu-[s] onta dikēn kai themin*', which describes Apollo's mission to Delphi and expresses the same perceptions of the role of the Delphic Apollo and his oracle. Given the model of a violent takeover leading to a higher order in Hesiod's *Theogony*, the violent transfer schema was one potential articulator of Apollo's takeover of Themis' oracle (cf. Apollod. 1.4.1). But the pull was towards the friendly transfer, with the conflict gravitating towards Themis' mother, Gaia. Themis and Apollo were positively related. The myth's structure creates a contrast between them – at the same time as it brings out their similarities; but the value of the Apollo – Themis relationship in this myth is also determined through their relationship as a pair to the pair Gaia-Apollo which is their alternative. When related to the Gaia-Apollo pair, the relationship between Themis and Apollo drifts towards the friendly pole, with Gaia-Apollo occupying the hostile one, as in *IT*.

In the *IT* version another set of relationships also comes into play: the pair Gaia-Themis is implicitly compared with, and presented as inferior to, the pair Zeus-Apollo. Zeus is the sovereign, thus his offspring, Apollo, wins. This is one of the myth's meanings. Gaia was a guarantor of the old order, but she is subordinate to Zeus, the guarantor of the new, higher, order, and of Apollo's prophecies. The (intertwined) representations 'male is superior to female', and 'the father-son relationship is superior to the mother-daughter one' structure, and are articulated in, this myth. To understand fully the myth's meanings we must consider its dramatic context. It is part of a song praising Apollo at a crucial moment in the action, thus presaging a happy ending, since it suggests that Orestes' doubts were mistaken and Apollo's guidance was right (see especially v. 1254). Within the song, the Previous Owners myth fore-shadows that ending most potently. For it says that Apollo's prophecy is guaranteed by Zeus, which is equivalent to saying that Apollo's prophecy to Orestes was right, that they will be saved. The violent takeover of the oracle in the myth, which led to the establishment of a superior cult, foreshadows – and thus symbolically characterises, and will in its turn be characterised by – the end of the play: the violent takeover of an especially holy statue and the

establishment of a new, superior, civilised, cult – of Artemis Tauropolos presented as an acculturated version of the Tauric cult.⁶⁶ Prophecy is an important theme in *IT*, as in the Previous Owners myth. It is mysterious and in some ways frightening – as well as order-creating and helpful; it is also uncertain and vulnerable to misinterpretation. In *IT* these negative characteristics gravitate to Gaia's prophecy, which is defeated in the myth and also proved fallacious within the play – for Iphigeneia misunderstood her prophetic dream (which only told part of the truth); they are also limited, and offer no guidance.⁶⁷ In the myth the prophetic dreams sent by Gaia are negatively characterised: they are born of malice, they come unbidden (and are thus not controllable), and they are associated, through language and content, with darkness and night. Thus, in both myth and play, the dark side of prophecy drifts to Gaia, and this allows Apollo's prophecy to emerge as wholly positive. Prophecy's dark side has been articulated, but, because it was attributed to the defeated and superseded Gaia, it has not contaminated Apollo's oracle; on the contrary, that oracle has contributed to the dark prophecy's defeat, and is thus presented as its opposite, strengthened by its failure.

This variant, then, was also shaped by, and expressed, a belief in progress – in the cosmos, and in prophecy, the instrument of communication between men and gods. It reaffirms the Delphic oracle's reliability as guide, and emphasises the association with Zeus and his order, which supersede the darker and more dangerous aspects of the cosmos, as of prophecy. It is a tale of reassurance, faith in progress in the divine order and in the possibility of divine guidance for humanity – through the Delphic oracle. In the play also the reliability of the Delphic Apollo's prophecy – after it had been repeatedly questioned (78–103; 573–5; 711–15; 723) – is proved; it offered guidance, salvation and happiness beyond Orestes' expectations and led to the foundation of a new cult beneficial for all time. This focal dramatic strand of the play is condensed, and foreshadowed, in the Previous Owners myth in 1234–83.

According to Aesch. *Eum.* 1–8, Gaia gave the Delphic oracle to Themis, succeeded with her consent by Phoebe, who gave it to her grandson Apollo on his birth. That this friendly transfer foreshadows the play's conclusion has been noted by others, as has the passage's relationship with Hesiod's *Theogony*.⁶⁸ Since in the early fifth century the established schema for the replacement of a primordial deity by a younger god was the violent transfer of the *Theogony*'s succession myth – through which Apollo replaced Gaia – the friendly transfer variant was perhaps created – in the context of the play's needs and aims – by Aeschylus. This would explain why there is, uniquely in his version, an extra mediating figure, Phoebe, whose close kinship with Apollo allows a friendly power-transfer from an older goddess to a younger god, through the schema 'gift on a special occasion' (compare, e.g., Diod. v.2.3). Phoebe is also a representation – in this play where male-female family

relationships are an important issue of a positive relationship between Apollo and the maternal side of his family – perhaps a symbolic counterweight to Orestes’ matricide and Apollo’s role in it and in its aftermath. The Aeschylean myth’s meanings are a more ethical, ‘civilised’ version of the violent variants, ascribing a higher ethical tone to the oracle (and its god) – again represented as instrumental in establishing order, and symbolically homologous to Zeus’ reign of justice.

One Ephoros fragment (*FGrH* 70 F 31b) tells us that Apollo and Themis founded the oracle together, to guide and civilise humanity, another (F 150) that Apollo obtained Delphi from Poseidon in exchange for Tainaron. The relationship between the two is unclear (cf. *FGrH* IIC, 49). They could be harmonised if Apollo had obtained Delphi as a region (with or without a sanctuary) from Poseidon, and then founded the oracle with Themis. This joint foundation is a transformation of the mytheme ‘Apollo succeeds Themis’, stressing the two deities’ similarity and complementarity. In one story (Paus. 10.5.6) Poseidon had owned the oracle jointly with Gaia, who gave her share to Themis, who gave it to Apollo, to whom Poseidon ceded his in return for Kalaureia. In both versions Apollo obtains Delphi from Poseidon through gift-exchange. Since it characterised Zeus’ rule in the *Theogony*,⁶⁹ gift-exchange was the most fitting mode of succession in changes of ownership between ‘younger gods’, especially when, as here, it is differentiated from ownership changes involving symbolically charged generational differences. Pausanias (10.24.4) explains the presence of Poseidon’s altar in the temple through his Previous Ownership of the oracle, thus showing that one function of the myth was to explain Poseidon’s role in Delphic cult⁷⁰ and articulate his relationship to Apollo. The presence of certain significant physical elements and phenomena which belonged to Poseidon’s sphere, springs, rocks and earthquakes, may also have been seen as tokens of that god’s claim on the locality. Apollo and Poseidon are antithetical: Apollo belongs to the symbolic pole of culture, Poseidon to that of wild nature;⁷¹ in the Delphic oracle – the myth says and the cult shows – Poseidon and his values are subordinate to Apollo and the Apolline. Poseidon and Gaia are semantically related; their relationship to each other is comparable to that between Apollo and Themis. As a pair co-operating at Delphi, they are opposed to (and the myth of their partnership may have been inspired by) the pair co-operating in the cult of the present: Apollo and Athena, both symbolically opposed to Poseidon⁷² – and Gaia. Thus, these variants represent the Delphic oracle as a civilising centre, in which the ‘wilder’ deities – and what they represented – were subordinated to Apollo the lawgiver and civiliser. Clearly, the Previous Owners myth, once established, became the vehicle for articulating relationships between Apollo and the other Delphic deities, especially those symbolically antithetical to the order and civilisation represented by Apollo; thus, different variants of the Previous Owners myth, expressing different variations of the meaning ‘from savage to civilised’, were created by filling the ‘wild Previous Owner’ slot with

different deities.⁷³

The my theme ‘Gaia herself prophesied at her oracle’, (Paus. 10.5.6) and the representation of Themis prophesying on the tripod, connect the Pythia with these two goddesses, ascribe this divination rite to them. This is correlative with, and so articulates and explains, a tension between on the one hand the prophetic ritual’s order-creating function and Apollo the civilising god of order, and on the other a divination rite involving disorder (the Pythia’s ecstatic state),⁷⁴ a mysterious access to the divine will, a temporary and partial blurring of the limits between mankind and the gods. Like Gaia, the Pythia is an ambivalent female figure who oversteps the normal limits; this, the myth implies, is because she is a legacy from Gaia, but now she operates under the control of Apollo the god of order, who has tamed the previously disordered – and fearsome – divination rite.

Thus, all variants of the Previous Owners myth are shaped by, and express, positive representations of the Delphic oracle and its god, and of the role and nature of prophecy, and also perceptions pertaining to the ritual and to relationships between deities – and through them also to the Greek conception of the cosmos. The Previous Owners myth, then, which does not fit the facts of, and therefore cannot be explained as, cultic history, makes perfect sense as a myth, expresses, and is structured by, significant Greek collective representations. In this sense, this myth is ‘true’.⁷⁵

Appendix: The Omphalos – Some Further Remarks

An important transformation of the Minoan ritual nexus ‘oval stone, eagle-hawk and young god’ in Delphic cult is the nexus ‘omphalos, eagles and Zeus’⁷⁶ in the story that the omphalos marks the centre of the world, which was determined by Zeus, who released two eagles, one from the East and one from the West, who met at Delphi (cf. Pind. fr. 54). Here the god connected with the omphalos is Zeus; it is therefore interesting that the Minoan god involved in that ritual nexus had contributed – or rather, his later transformations did – to the creation of Zeus’ (especially the young Zeus’) persona⁷⁷ as well as Apollo’s. Thus the fact that the Minoan god connected with the stone contributed to the creation of both Apollo and the young Zeus is reflected in the omphalos’s association in the Delphic cult of the historical period with both Apollo (the sanctuary’s presiding deity in whose adyton the omphalos stood) and Zeus – through the myth of Zeus’ eagles.⁷⁸

Zeus is also associated with another sacred stone at Delphi, which, in my view, is another transformation of the Minoan god’s stone: the stone swallowed by Kronos which Zeus set up at Delphi as a sema (Hes. *Th.* 498–500) when he became the world’s sovereign.⁷⁹ In my view, this mytheme arose in connection with the stone which (on my hypothesis) entered the Delphic cult as part of Apollo’s Cretan component, through the interaction between four

elements. First, the Minoan stone's association with the god who had contributed to the young Zeus' persona – which included the myths surrounding his birth and upbringing in Crete;⁸⁰ for this brought that stone within the orbit of the mythological nexus of Zeus' birth and its sequel. Indeed, in my view, the motif 'stone swallowed by Kronos instead of Zeus' – which is the second element that went into the making of the mytheme we are considering – was probably itself a mythological transformation of the ritual association between the stone and the Minoan god who contributed to the creation of the young Zeus' persona; for in both cases (in the Minoan ritual and in the Greek myth) there is a symbolic equivalence between the god's symbolic death and a stone. The third element is the fact that Apollo prophesied at Delphi under Zeus' supreme authority, which entailed an association between Delphi and the sovereign god. Finally, Delphi's identity as a major Panhellenic sanctuary created the symbolic space in which Zeus' victory could be connected with Delphi, made Delphi a plausible setting for the sema of Zeus' victory.

All interpretations of the omphalos can be made sense of if we understand it to be one transformation of the Minoan stone (the mythico-ritual nexus of which was reinterpreted so as to fit the Delphic cultic context), with Zeus' sema being another such transformation. The centre of the world interpretation and the myth of Zeus' eagles can be seen as an elaboration – in interaction with the (reworked) Minoan stone's associations with eagles – of the mytheme 'Zeus set up the sema marking his sovereignty at Delphi', which gave a cosmic dimension to the notion of a sanctuary as in some sense a centre of the world⁸¹ – an enlargement underpinned at another level by Delphi's central place in archaic Greece. In any case, in this (centre-eagles) story the omphalos is also a sema of Zeus, also connected with his sovereignty of the world – which in the myth he is mapping. The two stones, then, are semantically very close, and this supports the view that they are related transformations of one earlier cult object. The omphalos's funerary interpretations⁸² resulted from the interaction between the Minoan stone's funerary connections⁸³ and the funerary 'spaces' of Delphic myth and cult – which involved Dionysos and the Python. On this view, the Minoan stone gave rise to different cult objects, associated with different my themes and rituals, through the interaction between, on the one hand, the mythemes and rituales associated with that stone when it entered Delphic cult, and on the other the 'spaces' in Delphic cult and myth – as they were developing in response to the needs which the oracle and its god fulfilled in archaic Greece. Through fission and conflation these transformations were apparently distributed between two physical objects: the omphalos in the adyton and Zeus' sema.

Notes

* I am very grateful to Professor C. Rolley for discussing this paper with me at great length. Professor H. W. Parke was kind enough to discuss Gaia with me, despite our disagreement.

1. The myth: Aesch. *Eu.* 1–8; Pind. fr. 55; Eur. IT 1234–83; Eur. *Or.* 163–5; Ephorus *FGrH* 70 F 31B, F 150; Aristonooos, *Paeon to Apollo* (M. G. Collin, *Fouilles de Delphes III. Epigraphie* vol. ii (Paris, 1909–13)) no. 191, iii; Paus. 10.5.6–7, 24.4; Diod. 16.26; Plut. *Pyth. orac.* 402C–E; Schol. Eur. *Or.* 164; Photius, *Lex. s.v. themisteuein*; Pind. *Pyth.* Hypoth. a; Apollod. 1.4.1; Menander, *Rhet. Gr.* ed. Spengel, iii, pp. 441–2; Theopompus *FGrH* 115 F 80; Orph. *H.* 79; Hygin. *Fab.* III; Lucan 5.79–81; Ovid. *Met.* 1.320–1; 4.643. Cf. also Plut. *Def. nrac.* 414A–B.

2. See, e.g., H. W. Parke and D. E. W. Wormell, *The Delphic Oracle*, vol. i, *The History* (Oxford, 1956) 6–13; H. Gallet de Santerre, *Délos primitive et archaïque* (Paris, 1958) 150–1; M. Delcourt, *L'oracle de Delphes* (Paris, 1955) 28–32; R. Martin and H. Metzger, *La Religion grecque* (Vendôme, 1976) 15, 28–33; Y. Béquignon, 'De quelques usurpations d'Apollon en Grèce centrale d'après des recherches récentes', *Rev. Arch.* (1949) 62–8; G. Roux, *Delphes. Son oracle et ses dieux* (Paris, 1976) 21–34; H.-V. Herrmann, *Omphalos* (Münster, 1959) 100–16; H.-V. Herrmann, 'Zur Bedeutung des delphischen Dreifusses', *Boreas*, 5 (1982) 54–66; B. C. Dietrich, 'Reflections on the origins of the oracular Apollo', *BICS*, 25(1978) 5. Sceptical/against: M. P. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion* I, 3rd edn (Munich, 1967) 171–2; C. Rolley, *Fouilles de Delphes V.3. Les trépieds à cuve clouée* (Paris, 1977) 137–8; J. Fontenrose, *The Delphic Oracle* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1978) 1; 4; P. Amandry, *La Mantique apollinienne à Delphes. Essai sur le fonctionnement de l'oracle* (Paris, 1950) 214.

3. And as Fontenrose, *Oracle*, 1, noted.

4. Discussion and bibliography: Burkert, *HN*, 177–8.

5. See, e.g., M. Detienne, *Dionysos Slain* (Baltimore and London, 1979) 14–6; N. Loraux, 'La Grèce hors d'elle', *L'homme*, 20 (1980) 108–10.

6. See, e.g., for Delphi: C. Sourvinou-Inwood, 'The Myth of the First Temples at Delphi', *CQ*, 29 (1979) 231–51; F. Graf, *Gnechische Mythologie* (Munich and Zurich, 1985) 106–7.

7. The bibliography is vast; most recently: R. Janko, *Homer, Hesiod and the Hymns. Diachronic Development in Epic Diction* (Cambridge, 1982) 99–132; W. G. Thalmann, *Conventions of Form and Thought in Early Greek Epic Poetry* (Baltimore and London, 1984) 64–73.

8. On which: D. L. Page, *Sappho and Alcaeus* (Oxford, 1955) 246–50.

9. Apollo is the first owner also in Paus. 10.5.7–8 which gives two versions of Apollo's 'foundation of the oracle': (a) it was founded for Apollo by Hyperboreans, (b) shepherds discovered it – an alternative to Diod. xvi.26 (chasm taken to be Gaia's oracle). The goat element is probably earlier than the Previous Owners myth. (Cf. below, note 47 and cf. also Apollo's pastoral function.) Paus. 10.5.7 shows that the goats were not perceived as inextricably bound with Gaia's ownership.

10. A deposit of Mycenaean objects (pottery, a few objects of metal, stone and glass paste, and about 175 female terracotta figurines and one animal figurine) was found in the archaic sanctuary of Athena Pronaia (R. Demangel, *Fouilles de Delphes II. Topographie et architecture. Le sanctuaire d'Athéna Pronaia* (Paris, 1926) 5 – 36); this is a seventh-century deposit, probably buried during the construction of the temple (cf. L. Lerat in 'Chronique des fouilles en 1956', *BCH*, 81 (1957) 708–10), and made up of the 'holy' Mycenaean objects found by the locals while building and ploughing (cf. C. Rolley, 'Les grands sanctuaires panhelléniques', in R. Hägg (ed.) *The Greek Renaissance of the Eighth Century B.C.: Tradition and Innovation* (Stockholm, 1983) 113).

11. See Amandry, *Mantique*, 205–7; Rolley, *Trépieds*, 136–7; see also Martin and Metzger, *Religion*, 30–1. On the finds: L. Lerat, 'Fouilles de Delphes (1934–1935)', *Rev. Arch.* 1938, 187–207. The presence of rhyta does not entail a cult-place. Rhyta appear in domestic, funerary and cultic contexts; on the mainland most come from graves, a few from domestic contexts; in Minoan Crete large groups of rhyta are found in repositories of cult implements, but in Mycenaean shrines rhyta are rare (R. B. Koehl, 'The Functions of Aegean Bronze Age Rhyta', in R. Hägg and N. Marinatos (eds), *Sanctuaries and Cults in the Aegean Bronze Age* (Stockholm, 1981) 179–88). P. G. Themelis, *Annuario*, n.s. 45(1983) vol. iii, 248–50 claims to have identified some Mycenaean capitals which he assumes to have come from a Mycenaean colonnaded room with a cultic function. The argument relies on unwarranted, mutually supporting assumptions. Even if the objects are (a) capitals (which is doubtful) and (b) Mycenaean, they cannot support Themelis' claims.

12. So when Herrmann (*Omphalos*, 100; 'Bedeutung', 54) states that Gaia's 'Idole' were found, he is completely misrepresenting and distorting the facts. Perhaps the archaic Greeks assumed that these female figurines pertained to a female deity, and so deposited them in Athena's sanctuary; but this says nothing about their Mycenaean significance. On Mycenaean figurines and their function most recently: E. B. French, 'Mycenaean figures and figurines, their typology and function', in Hägg and Marinatos (eds), *Sanctuaries*, 173–8; E. B. French, in C. Renfrew, *The Archaeology of Cult. The Sanctuary at*

13. A. Brelich, 'Religione micena: osservazioni metodologiche', *Atti e Memorie del primo Congresso Internazionale de Micenologia* (Rome, 1968) 924–7. So vague notions such as 'the Great goddess of old Aegean religion' who lived on in Delphic tradition under the names of Gaia and Themis (Herrmann, *Omphalos*, 100) are entirely out of place.

14. This, for example, is the underlying implication in Roux, *Delphes*, 26.

15. See Rolley, *Trépieds*, 135–8, 142–3; Rolley, 'Sanctuaires', 109–14.

16. Roux, *Delphes*, 23. He takes Gaia to have been worshipped in the later sanctuary of Apollo.

17. On *a-ta-na po-ti-ni-ja*: M. Gérard-Rousseau, *Les mentions religieuses dans les tablettes mycéniennes* (Rome, 1968) 44–5; J. Chadwick, *The Mycenaean World* (Cambridge, 1976) 88–9; Burkert, *GR*, 44, 364 n 17, 139, 403 n 3.

18. See also Rolley, *Trépieds*, 136.

19. As Roux, *Delphes*, 25 admits.

20. Béquignon, 'Usurpations', 66–7. He thinks Mycenaean Gaia also had a small shrine at the site of the later Apollo sanctuary.

21. F. Cassola, *Inni Omerici* (Verona, 1975) 89. Cf. also Herrmann, *Omphalos*, 100.

22. See, e.g., Gallet de Santerre, *Délos*, 136; 150.

23. See Roux, *Delphes*, 25, 29–30.

24. Burkert, *GR*, 136; against the etymological argument also Chadwick, *Mycenaean World*, 86–7.

25. Burkert, *GR*, 136–8.

26. Cf. Gérard-Rousseau, *Mentions*, 184–5; Chadwick, *Mycenaean World*, 94–5.

27. The date of the statue bases; on the latter: P. de la Coste-Messelière and R. Flacelière, 'Une Statue de la Terre à Delphes', *BCH*, 54 (1930) 283–95; Amandry, *Mantique*, 208 n 3.

28. Metzger and Martin, *Religion*, 30, 33 acknowledge that there is no archaeological evidence to support the priority of Gaia's oracle.

29. Plut. *Pyth. orac.* 402 C-D; E. Bourguet, *Fouilles de Delphes III. V. Epigraphie. Les comptes du IVe siècle* (Paris, 1932) 25 col. III, A, 3–4; on Gaia's sanctuary: Bourguet, op. cit., 129 n 1; J. Pouilloux, *Fouilles de Delphes II. Topographie et architecture. La région nord du sanctuaire* (Paris, 1960) 96; M. F. Courby, *Fouilles de Delphes II. Topographie et architecture. La Terrasse du temple* (Paris, 1927) 183–4.

30. Concise history of the site: P. de la Coste-Messelière, 'Topographie delphique', *BCH*, 93 (1969) 730–58. On this point cf. also P. Amandry, 'Chronique delphique (1970–1981)', *BCH*, 7(95)(1981) 677–9.

31. Cf., e.g., Courby, *Terrace*, 201; P. de la Coste-Messelière, *Au Musée de Delphes* (Paris, 1936) 69–72; contra: Amandry, *Mantique*, 210 n 2.

32. Some have argued that the bases had been moved there from a different location (cf. short discussion with bibliography: Amandry, *Mantique*, 208 n 3).

33. On this building: de la Coste-Messelière, 'Topographie', 734.

34. Cf. Martin and Metzger, *Religion*, 14–5; 28.

35. On Didyma, Claros and Ptoion, see Martin and Metzger, *Religion*, 35, 43–53, 53–60; Burkert, *GR*, 115; B. Fehr, 'Zur Geschichte des Apollonheiligtums von Didyma', *Marb. Winckelm. Progr.* 1971/2, 14–59; G. Gruben, 'Das archaische Didymaion', *Jdl*, 78 (1963) 78–177; E. Touloupa, 'The sanctuaries of Mount Ptoion in Boeotia', in E. Melas (ed.), *Temples and Sanctuaries of Ancient Greece* (London, 1973) 117–23. At Didyma a laurel + spring combination as at Delphi. The hypothesis (see, e.g., Martin and Metzger, *Religion*, 44) that these Apolline oracles' associations with springs are a legacy of earlier Gaia cults replaced by Apollo, for which there is no evidence whatsoever, is another example of the fallacy just discussed.

36. De la Coste-Messelière, 'Topographie', 736.

37. On which: De la Coste-Messelière, *ibid.* 736–7.

38. Roux, *Delphes*, 25, 28–33, 116; Delcourt, *Oracle*, 31, 32, 144; Parke and Wormell, *Oracle*, 6–7; Herrmann, *Omphalos*, 100–16; J. E. Harrison, 'Delphika', *JHS*, 79(1899) 205–51; B. C. Dietrich, *The Origins of Greek Religion* (Berlin, 1974) 308–9. For Martin and Metzger (*Religion*, 14–5, 28) the 'natural elements, water, tree, animals, chasm', were originally attached to Gaia. On springs: see above; on animals: notes 9 and 47; and cf. Apollo's connection with wolves and deer.

39. Parke and Wormell, *Oracle*, 10, 12–13; Herrmann, *Omphalos*, 101 n 303.

40. See C. Sourvinou-Inwood, 'Persephone and Aphrodite at Locri: a model for personality definitions in Greek religion', *JHS*, 98 (1978) 101–21; and cf. J. -P. Vernant, *Mythe et société en Grèce ancienne* (P'aris, 1974) 105–10; M. Detienne and J. -P. Vernant, *Les Ruses de l'intelligence* (Paris, 1974) 176.

41. On this: L. Gernet and A. Boulanger, *Le Génie grec dans la religion* (Paris, 1932, repr. 1970) 221–31; see above, note 40.

42. See Sourvinou-Inwood, 'First Temples' 233–6.

43. If it refers to Delphi, and not, as the scholium (on 806) claims, to Hades. On the chasm: Amandry, *Mantique*, 214ff; E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, 1951) 73–4, 91–2 n 66; Martin and Metzger, *Religion*, 34–8; Fontenrose, *Oracle*, 197–203; Parke and Wormell, *Oracle*, 19–24; Roux, *Delphes*, 110–7; Burkert, *HN*, 122–3; S. Price, 'Delphi and divination', in P. E. Easterling and J. V. Muir (eds), *Greek Religion and Society* (Cambridge, 1985) 139–40.

44. Amandry, 'Chronique', 687–9; see also J.-F. Bommelaer, 'La construction du temple classique de Delphes', *BCH*, 107 (1983) 193. Against the view (which implies that prophesying is tied up with one spot) that the sekos was rebuilt first, because of the special needs imposed by the cult: Bommelaer *op.cit.*, 192–215.

45. See Burkert, *GR*, 115, 116–7. Dietrich, 'Reflections', 5, speaks of contamination between chthonic and Apolline oracles; but this is a simple assumption, based, moreover, on an *a priori* – and mistaken – construct: it depends on the existence of Bronze Age chthonic oracles, which itself depends on the historical interpretation of the Previous Owners myth and similar legends.

46. On the omphalos: Herrmann, *Omphalos*; Nilsson, *Griechischen Religion*, 204 and n 6; E. Richards-Mantzoulinou, 'Melissa Potnia', *Ath. Ann. Arch.*, 12(1979) 72–92; and esp. Burkert, *HN*, 126–7. A list of representations of omphaloi: M. Blech, *Studien zum Kranz bei den Griechen* (Berlin and New York, 1982) 442.

47. In *Reading Dumb Images. A Study in Minoan Iconography and Religion* (forthcoming). Actual stone found: Renfrew, *Phylakopi*, 102; pi. 7. Scenes: stone + bird (eagle-hawk: not naturalistic, but a conflation combining the characteristics of both birds); Sellopoulo ring: *Ann. Br. School Ath.*, 69(1974) pi. 37; Kalyvia ring: *Corpus der minoischen und mykenischen Siegel (CMS)* II.3 no. 114, in which the stone appears to be decorated with fillets; fillets also on the object in a fresco fragment which may, as Evans suggested, be an oval stone: Sir Arthur Evans, *The Palace of Minos* (London, 1921–35) vol. II.2, 839, fig. 555 and p. 840. Stone (with pithos and plant) and young male god with bow: ring AM 1919.56: C. Sourvinou (Inwood), 'On the Authenticity of the Ashmolean Ring 1919.56', *Kadmos*, 10 (1971) 60–9, pi. I; the ring's authenticity is now accepted: see, e.g., I. Pini, 'Echt oder falsch? – Einige Fälle', *CMS Beiheft 1. Studien zur minoischen und helladischen Glyptik* (Berlin, 1981) 147. I am arguing (in the forthcoming book, on the basis of autopsy, microscopic examination of a cast and the study of many parallels) that the object in the god's other hand is a wild goat's hom. In my view, Apollo's association with goats (cf. Délos keraton (Callim. *Hymn to Apollo* 60–4), and the goats in Delphic myth) originated in Minoan Crete, but this is not the place to discuss this question. The Minoan god is also closely associated with a tree in the ritual involving the stone (cf. Sellopoulo and Kalyvia rings) – not a laurel, but a fig-tree (the laurel pertains to the Dorian – NW Greek component of Apollo. On Apollo's components see Burkert, *GR*, 144–5). These remarks are based on the conclusions of my study of the Minoan ritual, itself based on internal Minoan evidence alone, to the complete exclusion of historical Greek data.

48. Rolley, 'Sanctuaires', 110–1; Rolley, *Trépieds*, 145ff. On Apollo Delphinios: F. Graf, 'Apollon Delphinios', *MH*, 36(1979) 1–22.

49. Burkert, *HN*, 126–7. For more on the omphalos see above, Appendix.

50. Nilsson, *Griechischen Religion*, 204 and see 202.

51. For Herrmann, 'Bedeutung', *passim*, the tripod originated in the Mycenaean figurines' high-backed three-legged throne/chair, whose occupant he identifies as the Mother Goddess worshipped at Mycenaean Delphi, in myth Gaia-Themis, whom he associates with the Pythia sitting on the tripod. Apart from the implausibility of the identification of the tripod with the high-backed Mycenaean 'throne', Herrmann's reliance on the circular 'Mycenaean Gaia at Delphi' hypothesis invalidates his case. Amandry's suggestion (*Rev. Et. Gr.*, 97 (1984) xx–xxi. (I owe this reference to Professor C. Rolley)) that the Pythia's prophetic tripod (which, he says, had not been seen by the ancient writers and artists who spoke of, or represented it) may have been not a proper tripod but something related to the three-legged Mycenaean throne (survival of a tradition or preservation of a relic) is, in my view, wrong: (1) Though the Pythia was probably not in view when prophesying, we cannot know that the part of the adyton in which her tripod stood was not visible at other times. (2) There is no reason to suppose that the description of the instruments of divination would be kept secret, since the consultation procedure was spoken of freely. (3) The Delphian priesthood certainly did know what the prophetic tripod looked like, and it is highly implausible that they would have allowed its misrepresentation on, e.g., coins (eg Delphic Amphictyony coinage: C. M. Kraay, *Archaic and Classical Greek Coins* (London, 1976) 122, pi. 22 no. 414: Apollo, omphalos and laurel, and with them, and thus part of the cult (which identifies it as the prophetic tripod) a normal tripod). (On the Delphic tripod: Burkert, *HN*, 121–5; Parke and Wormell, *Oracle*, 24–6; Roux, *Delphes*, 119–23; F. Willemssen, 'Der delphische Dreifuss', *Jdl* 70 (1955) 85–104.)

52. If Themis was an owner of the oracle in Pi. P. 11.9–10, which is unlikely (the case against: H. Vos, *Themis* (Assen, 1956) 62–3 with bibl.), the two versions could be harmonised if in fr. 55 Gaia was, as in

Eur. *IT*, avenging Themis. The Gaia-Apollo conflict also in Theopompus *FGH* 115 F 80.

53. On Gaia: M. B. Arthur, 'Cultural Strategies in Hesiod's Theogony: Law, family, society', *Arethusa*, 15 (1982) 64, 65, 66, 70–1, 76; Nilsson, *Griechischen Religion*, 456–61; L. R. Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States*, vol. 3 (Oxford, 1907) 1–28, 307–11; L. Deubner, *Attische Feste*, 3rd edn (Vienna, 1969) 26–7.

54. See J.-P. Vernant, *Religion grecque, religions antiques* (Paris, 1976) 23.

55. On Zeus' conquest of sovereignty: Detienne and Vernant, *Ruses*, 61–124.

56. Cf. Vernant, *Religion grecque*, 25–6 on Hermes-Hestia.

57. See Burkert, *HN*, 121; Thalmann, *Conventions*, 72; J. Fontenrose, *Python* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1959) 13–22, 77–93.

58. J. Trümff, 'Stadtgründung und Drachenkampf', *Hermes*, 86 (1958) 129–57; F. Vian, *Les Origines de Thebes. Cadmos et les Spartes* (Paris, 1963) 94–113.

59. The monster's rotting corpse gave Delphi the name Pytho and Apollo the epithet Pythian (*Hom. H. Ap.* 372–4). (Compare Eur. *Ion* 989–1119).

60. Bodson, *Animal*, 70 and n 89. (In the *Hom. H. Ap.* the dragoness was associated with a spring (300)). In Eur. *IT* the monster is male and Gaia's son.

61. In Menander Rhetor and in Pind. *Pyth.* Hypoth. a, the dragon does not guard the oracle; in the latter it usurps it and in the former it devastates the countryside and keeps pilgrims away. (Cf. Plut. *Def. orac.* 414A–B).

62. Hes. *Th.* 901–2. On Themis: Vos, *Themis*, 39–78; F. W. Hamdorf, *Griechische Kultpersonifikationen der vorhellenistischen Zeit* (Mainz, 1964) 50 – 1, 108–10; Burkert, *GR*, 185–6; E. B. Harrison, 'The Shoulder-Cord of Themis', in U. Hockmann and A. Krug (eds), *Festschrift für Frank Brommer* (Mainz, 1977) 156–60; H. Lloyd-Jones, *The Justice of Zeus* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1971) 166–7 n 23; Nilsson, *Griechischen Religion*, 171–2; W. Pötscher, 'Moirai, Themis und Time im homerischen Denken', *Wien. Stud.*, 73 (1960) 31–5. On the primordial goddesses' integration in Zeus' order: Detienne and Vernant, *Ruses*, 102; Arthur, 'Strategies', 65. In my view, Ge-Themis is a later syncretism; Themis was not identified with Gaia in fifth-century religion; Aesch. *PV.* 211–13 is surely a theological statement similar to Heraclitus' (B15 Diels/Kranz) Hades-Dionysos identification. Perhaps it was inspired – given the mantic context – by our myth, under the impulse of the dramatic context: Themis is Prometheus' mother in *PV* (18, 874). Her identification with Gaia may depend on Prometheus' ambiguous generational affiliation (Detienne and Vernant, *Ruses*, 81–2. Affiliated to the Titans in 206–20, while as a Titans' son he should be of Zeus' generation) which it helps to blur.

63. Schol. Eur. *Or.* 164; cf. Paus. 10.5.6. Cf. also Aristonoo's paean iii; Photius, *Lex. s.v. themisteuein*.

64. A comparable drift in Kronos' relationships with Uranos and Zeus: Detienne and Vernant, *Ruses*, 101.

65. The connection of *themistes* (on *themistes*: Lloyd-Jones, *Justice*, 6–7, 84) and *themisteuō* (on *themisteuō*: Vos, *Themis*, 20–1) with prophecy enhanced her appropriateness as owner. (Cf. Diod. 5.67.4). But the original meaning of *themistes* was not, as has been claimed, 'oracular pronouncements' (see Vos, *Themis*, 17–22. Themis not oracular before the fifth century: Vos, *Themis*, 62–5; Hamdorf, *Kultpersonifikationen*, 51). In Delphic cult Gaia was more important than Themis.

66. In the play the transition from savage to civilised is effected through a movement from a barbarian land to Attica, in the myth through a movement in time and divine generations.

67. In strict logic, since Zeus removed the prophetic dreams' truthfulness, Iphigeneia's dream would be different from those sent by Gaia in 1262ff. But in symbolic logic they are the same; thus Iphigeneia believes in, and acts on, her dream.

68. F. I. Zeitlin, 'The dynamics of misogyny: myth and myth-making in the Oresteia', *Arethusa*, 11 (1978) 163–4; J. H. Finley, *Pindar and Aeschylus* (Cambridge, Mass., 1955) 277; D. S. Robertson, 'The Delphian Succession in the Opening of the Eumenides', *CR* (1941), 69–70. Cf. also P. Vidal-Naquet, 'Chasse et sacrifice dans l'Orestie d'Eschyle', in J.-P. Vernant and P. Vidal-Naquet, *Mythe et Tragédie en Grèce ancienne*, 2nd edn (Paris, 1981) 154–5.

69. Arthur, 'Strategies', 64.

70. G. Daux, 'Le Poteidanion de Delphes', *BCH*, 92(1968) 540–9; Pouilloux, *La région nord*, 92–8.

71. Cf. Burkert, *HN*, 134; Parker, this volume, [Ch. 9](#).

72. Cf. Burkert, *GR*, 139.

73. Cf. Plut. *Plyth. orac.* 402C–D: the Muses Gaia's paretrois at the oracle. (On the Delphic Muses: C. B. Kitzas, 'Muses delphiques à Argos', *BCH*, Suppl. vi (1981) 195–209; their dark side: *ibid.* 209 n 93.) In Pind. *pyth.* Hypoth. a the oracle was owned by Nyx, then Themis, then Apollo, with a separate line of succession for the tripod: first Dionysos prophesied on it, then Python took it over and was killed by Apollo – probably reflecting the tradition that the tripod held the remains of Dionysos or Python (cf. Burkert, *HN*, 123–5, also on the Apollo-Dionysos relationship at Delphi), reshaped through the Previous

Owners schema which was a vehicle for articulating Apollo's relationships with other Delphic deities. Gaia's replacement by Nyx confirms that it was the slot 'primordial, antithetical to Apollo goddess' that was important. Nyx is more negative than Gaia, so the contrast was greater.

74. See also Burkert, *HN*, 130.

75. After this paper was completed, M. L. West's 'Hesiod's Titans' appeared in *JHS*, 105 (1985) 174–5; his thesis is based on the assumption of the myth's historicity against which I have argued here, and on a reversal of the usually accepted relationship between Aesch. *Eu.* 1–8 and Hes. *Th.*

76. Another such transformation may underlie Apollo's close association with a particular type of hawk, the *kirkos*. (On Apollo and birds: L. Bodson, *HIERA ZOIA. Contribution à l'étude de la place de l'animal dans la religion grecque ancienne* (Brussels, 1978) 94–8, my 'First Temples', 239 with bibliography.)

77. The Minoan young god is already syncretised as Dictaeon Zeus (*di-kata-jo di-we*) in the Linear B tablets of Knossos (KN Fp 1.2). I discuss this syncretism elsewhere (cf. note 47). (Gérard-Rousseau, *Mentions*, 61 is wrong in thinking that the reading *di-we* is uncertain: see J. Chadwick, J. T. Killen and J. -P. Olivier (eds), *The Knossos Tablets*, 4th edn (Cambridge, 1971) 182; cf. also J. -P. Olivier, L. Godart, C. Seydel, C. Sourvinou, *Index Généraux du linéaire B* (Rome, 1973) s.v. *di-we* (p. 50).

78. A third god whose persona contained transformed elements of the young Minoan god is the god who became the dying Dionysos, and whom we may call, for convenience's sake, Dionysos/Zagreus. Thus it cannot be excluded that (the dying) Dionysos' association with the Delphic omphalos which is said to be his grave in Tatian, *Adv. Graec.* 8 may be another transformation of the association between the stone and the gods to whose persona the (transformations of the) Minoan god had contributed, especially since, as we saw (cf. text), the funerary connections of the omphalos correspond to similar connotations of the stone in the Minoan ritual.

79. Unworked wool was placed on it (Paus. 10.24.6), as on the omphalos. A. Frickenhaus, 'Heilige Stätten in Delphi', *A th. Mit.*, 35(1910) 271–2 saw this stone as the omphalos' 'Vorbild'.

80. On which cf. R. F. Willets, *Cretan Cults and Festivals* (London, 1962) 199–220.

81. See on this Burkert, *HN*, 127, who notes that the image of the navel expressed anthropomorphically the concept 'centre of the world'.

82. Python's or Dionysos' tomb (references in Parke and Wormell, *Oracle*, 14 n 17).

83. See text above.

Three Approaches to Greek Mythography

Albert Henrichs

Apollodorus of Athens (c. 150 BC), one of the most knowledgeable authorities on Greek mythology in the Hellenistic period, searched the remotest corners of Greek literature for significant myths that would highlight the characteristics of individual gods and heroes. One day he came across an obscure epic poem called *Meropis*, which described in vivid detail how Athena killed and flayed the monstrous giant Asteros on the island of Kos and put on his impenetrable skin as a protective cloak. His curiosity aroused by the ‘peculiar mythical content’ (*to idiōma tēs historias*), he took copious notes which he eventually incorporated in his monumental survey of Greek religious beliefs entitled *On the Gods*. A century later the Epicurean philosopher Philodemus excerpted Apollodorus’ work, or an existing compilation of it, and included a reference to the *Meropis* and to Athena’s primitive dress in his scathing attack on Greek mythology and on the anthropomorphic conception of divinity that underlies it. Athena’s Koan adventure does not surface again in the literature of later periods, even though the mythological material gathered by the Epicureans was widely used by the Christian apologists for equally polemical purposes.¹

This memorable episode from the life of a leading Alexandrian scholar illustrates the concept as well as the practice of Greek mythography at least as effectively as any of the existing accounts of the major mythographers and their works.² The process by which the literary treatment of a given myth was channelled into the mainstream of mythography was repeated on innumerable occasions, most of which will have lacked the excitement that Apollodorus must have felt when he discovered the *Meropis*. Once a myth became fixed in the literary tradition, it would either survive indefinitely along with the poem, play or other work of literature in which it was recorded, or it would eventually perish together with that record, unless some interested scholar saved it for posterity by including it in a collection of various myths. Such collectors of myths, who wrote down the mythical stories in plain prose, are called mythographers, and their collective product is mythography, a handmaiden of mythology.

The beginnings of Greek mythography go back to the genealogists (*FGrH* 1–14) and local historians (e.g. the Atthidographers, *FGrH* 323a–334) of the fifth and fourth centuries BC. Asclepiades of Tragilus, a pupil of Isocrates, compared the myths of Attic tragedy with earlier treatments.³ But the main mythographical collections date from the Hellenistic or early imperial period (c. 250 BC to AD 150) and fall into two broad categories. One approach was to collect relevant myths as background material for the explanation of major authors such as Homer, Pindar, the tragedians, and the Hellenistic poets. The ancient scholia to Pindar, Euripides, Theocritus, Apollonius of Rhodes and Lykophron are particularly rich sources of mythographical information.⁴ The most remarkable corpus of myths in this category, both for its importance and its inaccessibility, are the mythographical scholia to the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, which contain several hundred ‘mythical narratives’ (*historiai*). This vast collection of myths, collectively known as the *Mythographus Homericus* since 1892, circulated as a separate book in antiquity (at least from the first to the fifth century), but it has never been published as a single entity in modern times.⁵ The second category comprises independent collections of myths organised around a uniform theme, such as the star-myths ascribed to Eratosthenes (below, [section 3](#)), the love stories collected by Parthenius, or the transformation myths (*metamorphōseis*) of Antoninus Liberalis. Outstanding in this category as the principal post-Hellenistic handbook of Greek myths is the *Library* ascribed to Apollodorus (first or second century AD), which is arranged genealogically by mythical families and which served as the model for many modern collections of Greek myths.⁶

The best introduction to the nature of Greek mythography is one that examines specific problems of authorship, dating, composition or source criticism that are typically encountered by those interested in a given mythographical work (section 1, on Conon), a major mythographical component (section 2, on mythological catalogues), or a particular myth (section 3, on the Kallisto myth). In dealing with these topics I have tried throughout to emphasise the great importance of Greek art and of new papyrus finds for the proper evaluation of the mythographical tradition.

1. An ‘Obscure’ Collection of Myths: Conon’s *Diegeseis*

Conon’s corpus of fifty ‘Stories’ (*Diegeseis*) ranks as the most interesting and at the same time the most neglected of the smaller mythographical collections. Our knowledge of the author derives entirely from his work. He must have been active during the reign of Augustus, since he dedicated his collection to another man of letters, King Archelaus Philopator, or Philopatris, of Cappadocia (36 BC–AD 17), in the same way in which Parthenius dedicated

his collection of love stories to Cornelius Gallus. But whereas Parthenius' work survived in what appears to be its original form, Conon's did not, with the exception of three dozen lines on a papyrus fragment. The extant summary is the work of Photius, who excerpted the *Diegeseis* from the same mythographical manuscript in which he also read the *Library* of Apollodorus.⁷ Conon's Atticising style and apparent charm as a storyteller suffered immeasurable damage in the process of abbreviation. Yet the narrative content of the collection appears to be intact, even though Photius reproduced the individual stories with less than uniform fidelity. Preserved for posterity by Photius, Conon is once again in danger of falling into oblivion. The Teubner edition promised by Edgar Martini for the *Mythographi Graeci* never appeared. It did not do Conon much good that Felix Jacoby included him half-heartedly in the first volume of his *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* (by far the weakest in the series), where he does not belong and where few readers find him. The only published commentary is in Latin and dates from the very infancy of modern mythography. Written by C. G. Heyne's pupil Johann Arnold Kanne (1773–1824), it appeared in 1798, at a time when Heyne himself was preparing the second edition of his monumental exegetical notes on Apollodorus.⁸ As long as no adequate commentary is available, Conon remains in the closet. No wonder that one finds him described today as 'an extremely obscure Hellenistic mythographer'.⁹

Conon is obscure not because he is particularly difficult to understand but because the miscellaneous nature of his collection makes it difficult to consult. He is the only Greek mythographer who adopted neither a uniform theme nor a recognisable principle of organisation for his work. Myths which describe the founding of cities or the institution of local cults or which explain the distant origins of geographical names and popular proverbs alternate with love stories involving mythical or historical characters, with novelistic or paraenetic tales, and with stories about incredible events. His collection is a microcosm of Hellenistic mythography in that it represents the types of myths most favoured by the leading scholar-poets and antiquarians of the preceding centuries, who collected and disseminated them. He records more than fifteen foundation myths (*ktiseis*), for which he had the same preference as Callimachus or Apollonius of Rhodes.¹⁰ His interest in the aetiology of out-of-the-way cults matches that of Callimachus in the *Aitia*.¹¹ Although he was not as fond of mythical love stories as Parthenius or Ovid, he shares with them several memorable portrayals of pathetic love, all of which were inspired by Hellenistic models.¹² Since many Greek proverbs are incomprehensible without exact knowledge of the mythical figures and events to which they allude, the provinces of mythography and paroemiography occasionally overlap, as they do in the case of the two proverbs explained by Conon.¹³ Also included in his collection are three reports of incidents contrary to the laws of nature. No modern reader would classify these stories as mythological, but they illustrate the facility with which certain stories passed from

paradoxography to mythography, two narrative traditions that interacted freely throughout antiquity.¹⁴ The extreme rationalism with which Conon glosses over the more fantastic aspects of some of his myths is reminiscent of similar explanations in Palaephatus (who may have written in the early Hellenistic period) and Dionysius Scytobrachion (third century BC).¹⁵ Once or twice Conon makes use of the novella and the 'hidden message' (*ainos*), in an archaising vein which takes us beyond the Hellenistic period and back to the narrative modes of Herodotus and Ionian storytelling in general.¹⁶ Conspicuous by their absence, however, are myths about gods. The Olympians are peripheral in Conon. He often makes them intervene in human affairs through oracles, dreams and punitive actions, but they remain at best recipients of cult, or mere ancestors of mortal heroes, who are the principal denizens of Conon's mythical world. Gods take second place, and are never as prominent as, for instance, Artemis in the Kallisto myth (below, [section 3](#)).

Despite their rich diversity, Conon's fifty 'stories' are with few exceptions distinctly local myths and legends (*Lokalsagen*), many of which lie completely outside the mainstream of Greek mythology. It is this regional orientation, unparalleled except in Pausanias, which gives Conon's collection its unmistakable flavour and which makes him an invaluable source of local lore. But some areas of the Greek world are better represented than others. While the central and southern parts of Greece are largely ignored, the three regions which receive the most attention are, in order of frequency, the eastern Mediterranean with Asia Minor; northern Greece, especially Thrace; and Magna Graecia, including Sicily, as well as Rome. On the whole, Conon's geographical horizons reflect the overall constellation of political power at the time of Archelaus, who ruled over parts of central Anatolia as one of Rome's vassals. But the unusual emphasis on myths located in Thrace requires a more specific explanation. Conon apparently made extensive use of the work of a local Chalcidic historian, Hegesippus of Mekyberna (c. 300 BC), whose history of Pallene (*Palleniaka*, *FGH* 391 F 1–5) was presumably also available to Parthenius.¹⁷ Unlike Apollodorus of Athens or, on a lesser scale, the author of the *Library*, Conon unfortunately never quotes the books which he consulted. His failure to do so has distracted attention from his own work by engaging scholars in a largely futile quest for his real or alleged sources. Poor Conon emerged from their scrutiny as a master compiler (ironically, a negative self-image of nineteenth-century scholarship) who ransacked one or several hypothetical 'mythological compendia' for obscure myths, ostensibly with no other purpose in mind than to enable a future generation of even more erudite men to reconstruct the lost sources from which he had drawn his knowledge. Thanks to such exclusive preoccupation with source criticism, the actual content of Conon's collection has never been fully explored and assessed, let alone exhausted.¹⁸ What is needed is a comprehensive analysis of each of the fifty pieces, which should pay equal attention to source criticism (where some progress can be expected), narrative technique (more promising now that a

true specimen of his writing has emerged), mythology, religion and social history. In each of these areas, Conon is likely to make some contribution.

A few samples, almost picked at random, must suffice as appetisers. For modern mythographers Conon offers not only numerous variants of known myths, but at least three myths that are found nowhere else: the foundation of Olynthos; the origin of the cult of Apollo Gypaieus (otherwise unattested) at Ephesus; and the aetiological myth of the transition of the control over the Didymean oracle of Apollo from Branchos to the Euangelidai.¹⁹ In matters of cult, Conon provides valuable details about the ritual abuse (aischrology) customarily exchanged between male and female worshippers of Apollo Aiglatas/Asgelatas on the tiny island of Anaphe.²⁰ And finally, without Conon social historians would never know the full story of the famous homosexual courtship to which the author of the *Eudemian Ethics* (fourth century BC) alludes. It is about a Cretan named Promachos who undergoes numerous and dangerous tasks (*athla*) to please the boy Leukokomas with whom he is in love, only to find himself rejected. When the disappointed lover ostentatiously courts a rival, the boy kills himself.²¹ Conon's version of the story is particularly instructive. Even the names of the two men are significant of their respective status: adulthood versus adolescence. This is not a myth in the full sense, but many Greek myths convey exactly the same message.

Conon is only one example of the many unfinished tasks in the field of Greek mythography that are still waiting for their heroes. Some of the others will be more difficult, if also more important: a full-fledged commentary on the *Library* of Apollodorus, not in the manner of Frazer's delightful farrago of unorganised parallel passages and old-fashioned armchair anthropology, but a more informed approach that reflects the relationship of the *Library* to the rest of the mythographical tradition and to the primary poetic sources; a complete edition, based on the MSS as well as the papyri, of the *Mythographus Homericus*; and, not an enviable task, an edition and source analysis of all the mythological Greek scholia on Gregory of Nazianzus by the so-called Pseudo-Nonnus.²² If some of these tools had been available to me, the research for the following sections would have been easier.

2. Some Mythographical Components: Names and Catalogues

Greek myth focuses on the individual hero, whose status depends as much on his ancestry as on his ability to deal successfully with other heroes. Most mythical accounts, whether they are found in poetry, prose texts or vase painting, concentrate on heroic families and on the numerous modes of interaction between their members. Whenever heroes come together for some action, they are identified by their names, their lineage and their provenance. It

follows that the names and genealogies of the countless heroes and heroines of Greek mythology are a main component of Greek mythography, much in the same way in which prosopography and chronology constitute the backbone of historiography. But the names of mythical figures were considerably more susceptible to transformation as they passed from one account into the next than were the names of historical persons. Regional versions of the same myth, for instance, would often offer new or different names, not to mention the desire for innovation on the part of bards, poets or local narrators. Even after a myth had entered the literary tradition, established names could still undergo serious deformations in the course of long centuries of written transmission. But it was the minor figures and less familiar names that were most vulnerable. It is not surprising, therefore, that the nomenclature of mythical figures tended to be in a state of flux. These fluctuations merit close attention. Just as variant readings and certain types of errors are important criteria for a proper assessment of manuscripts and for tracing their affiliations, the incidence of mythological names and their treatment in a given mythographical text often determine its value as a source and make it easier to define its place in relation to other sources. The following examples, which are very selective, illustrate some of the ways in which individual names and especially whole catalogues of names affect our understanding of the mythographical tradition.

The Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women* is a genealogical poem of the sixth century BC which depends so heavily on the prosopography of heroic families that hexameters composed of two, three and even four names are not at all unusual. In its complete form the *Catalogue* must once have constituted the largest non-Homeric repertoire of mythological names inherited from the archaic period. Even in the fragmentary state in which we read it today it contains invaluable information on heroic nomenclature. Its reconstruction from papyrus fragments and scattered quotations marks the most conspicuous contribution to the study of Greek mythography in recent decades.²³ Because of its systematic arrangement by mythical families, the *Catalogue* has done more than any other epic poem to shape the mythographical tradition of later periods. Its genealogies and lists of names are frequently echoed in the *Library* of Apollodorus. In more modest numbers names derived from the *Catalogue* have occasionally come to light in rather remote corners of the mythographical landscape. The five daughters of Doros, whose names once appeared in Book I of the *Catalogue* as unlikely mothers of the mountain nymphs, Satyrs and Kouretes, have re-emerged in a Vienna papyrus which lists various mythical families and their progeny.²⁴ An even more revealing instance of Hesiodic influence on later mythography is the dictionary of metamorphoses on a Michigan papyrus of the imperial period.²⁵ It describes the transformations of mythical figures whose names begin with the first letter of the alphabet. Three of its five extant accounts (*historiai*) are attributed to Hesiod. The source for the entries on Aktaion and Alkyone, daughter of Aiolos,

is explicitly identified as the Hesiodic *Catalogue*. In all three cases the source attributions which are appended to the actual transformation stories repeat traditional formulas, 'as Hesiod recounts (*historei*)' or 'as Hesiod says in the *Catalogue of Women*'. Similar attributions occur frequently in the Mythographus Homericus as well as in most of the transformation myths collected by Parthenius and Antoninus Liberalis. But the papyrus dictionary is unique in that it combines attributions of the standard type with mythological accounts arranged in alphabetical order according to the names of their protagonists.

The Hesiodic *Catalogue* is not the only epic poem which is no longer extant but whose influence can still be traced in later mythography. Mythological names derived from epic sources more elusive than the *Catalogue* sometimes find their way into various kinds of mythographical papyri, where they are not always easy to recognise, especially if they are unusual or not otherwise attested. Such is the case with the Koan giant Asteros, who was rescued from oblivion by Apollodorus of Athens, as we saw earlier.²⁶ When the Cologne papyrus containing quotations from the *Meropis* was published in 1976, it was believed that Asteros' name as well as the title of the poem were absent from the rest of the mythographical tradition. But eventually both names were discovered in a poorly preserved passage of Philodemus, *On Piety*, which had long been misunderstood.²⁷ These names proved to be an important link between two major works of Hellenistic mythography. Scholars had always assumed that Apollodorus' monumental work *On the Gods* was the ultimate source for the mythological information found in Philodemus. The shared names, which occur nowhere else, are the first direct confirmation of their assumption.

Less spectacular but still unexplained is a series of mythological names on a Cornell papyrus which lists the parentage of Rhadamanthys ('son of Zeus and Europe'), Musaios ('son of Antiophemos'), Eumolpos ('son of Musaios') and Trophonios ('son of Apollo').²⁸ All of these genealogies have been known for a long time from various other sources.²⁹ The real interest of the papyrus lies in the preceding lines 2–5, which are poorly edited and require further study. There can be no doubt, however, that the lines in question offer several alternative genealogies of Triptolemos. The following translation reflects my tentative restoration of the Greek text: 'As for Triptolemos, [some (consider him) the son of] Keleos, [others] the son of [D]ysaules and B[r]auro, still others the son of Earth (Ge) and Heaven (Uranos).' The first genealogy is the standard Athenian version; the second is partially echoed elsewhere; the third, which is by far the most interesting, confirms a neglected variant reading in the *Library* of Apollodorus.³⁰ More importantly, the third genealogy also recalls the equally sublime descent ('I am the child of Earth and starry Heaven') claimed by the many initiates who commissioned the inscribed gold leaves which were found in tombs of southern Italy, Thessaly and Crete.³¹ The editors of the Cornell papyrus provide no commentary on any of the names.

Why were these particular names lumped together? Triptolemos, Musaios and Eumolpos are evidently Eleusinian, and so are several of their genealogies.³² Rhadamanthys is associated with Greek beliefs about afterlife and fits well in an Eleusinian ambience, but the presence of Trophonios is not so easily explained.³³ Dysaulos also points to Eleusis, where he and his wife Baubo appear as early as the fourth century BC as local autochthons said to have given hospitable reception to Demeter in the distant past.³⁴ The epic form of Antiphemos' name, i.e. Antiophemos, derives from the particular kind of Eleusinian poetry which circulated under the names of Musaios and Orpheus and which was still available to Pausanias.³⁵ It is obvious that the names and genealogies offered by the papyrus are no random collection, let alone a mere school text or writing exercise, as its editors suggested. This catalogue of Eleusinian names is considerably more valuable. It affords a rare prosopographical glimpse of a particular local mythology which was once so popular in Eleusinian circles but which perished in later antiquity.

Before we can proceed to more conventional catalogues of mythographical names, we must first consider some complications which have to do with homonyms and variant names and which often arise in this connection. Different persons of the same name are as abundant in Greek mythology as they are in real life. Prose writers no less than poets add the father's name or use other means of identification to distinguish namesakes. Apollonius of Rhodes and Hyginus, to name only these two, go out of their way to differentiate between Argonauts of the same name.³⁶ But homonyms that were handed down without any specification could easily turn into a source of confusion, especially if unresolved questions of mythical chronology made matters worse, as in the case of the alleged homonyms Telamon and Chalkodon discussed by Pausanias.³⁷ He concludes his discussion with a sensible remark which suggests the dimensions of the problem: 'Obscure persons who share the same names (*homōnymoi*) with more illustrious men tend to be as common in all ages as they are in my own time.'

Variant names for one and the same person are usually easier to deal with than homonyms. In most cases they amount to nothing more than minor variations of the same name, such as Euryte/Eureite³⁸ or the alternation between Antiphemos and Antiophemos noted above. Occasionally the two forms are farther apart, as in Amphidamas/Iphidamas³⁹ for the son of Busiris, Dorykleus/Dorkeus⁴⁰ for one of the sons of Hippokoon or Epikaste/Jocaste⁴¹ for Oedipus' wife and for the mother of Trophonios. But full-fledged alternate names, such as Iphigeneia/Iphianassa/Iphimede⁴² for the daughter sacrificed by Agamemnon, are usually found in early stages of the mythological tradition, where they often raise questions that are difficult or impossible to answer.

The number of possible variables rises sharply when individual names are strung together to form long lists of up to fifty names. Most instructive for our purposes are catalogues which exist in multiple versions and can be traced

from epic poetry or archaic art down to the mythographers of the imperial period. Many catalogues fit this description, but only three or four merit our attention. One of them is the catalogue of the participants in the Calydonian boar hunt. The event is described in the *Iliad* (9.529–99), but the heroes remain nameless, with the exception of Meleagros, the leader of the hunt. The earliest catalogue of the Calydonian hunters is found in art rather than literature. The François vase (c. 570 BC) names twenty hunters, eight of whom reappear in various literary accounts of the hunt. The name of Pelias' son Akastos, however, recurs only on an Attic black-figure dinos (c. 580 BC) and, amazingly, in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.⁴³ The continuity which links Ovid to the François vase would be less striking if we could be sure that Akastos was mentioned in Euripides' *Meleagros*. But alas, the better part of the play's messenger speech, in which the names of the hunters were recorded, is lost, and Akastos is not among the four surviving names.⁴⁴ Another hunter, Antaios/Ankaïos, is the boar's principal victim on the François vase and on a contemporary Attic dinos in Berne as well as in Bacchylides and the mythographical tradition.⁴⁵ Such consistency reduces the distance between visual representations and written versions of the same myth and provides an immediate verbal rapport between some of the earliest mythological scenes in Greek art and the mythography of later periods.

But the continuity would be interrupted just as often, and old names were replaced by new ones. An interesting example of broken continuity in the transmission of mythological catalogues has to do with the funeral games of Pelias. Virtually ignored in extant Greek literature, these games have left only the barest trace in Greek mythography. Apollodorus mentions them in passing, but gives no details.⁴⁶ But identical lists of the heroes who had been victorious on this occasion can be found in Hyginus and in two papyri from the imperial period which command attention in connection with the thorny problem of Hyginus' Greek sources.⁴⁷ All three lists are of relatively late date and do not agree at all with the names of the victors and their various disciplines which Pausanias saw on the chest of Kypselos, a rare relic from the archaic period.⁴⁸ Pausanias read the names of five charioteers, two of which recur on Side B of the archaic Corinthian vase known as the Amphiaraios krater.⁴⁹ But the names of the remaining charioteers differ on the two vases, and the two shared names are absent from the later literary lists, which follow a separate tradition. In this case the continuity seems to have ended not long after the archaic period. What is more, a considerable degree of variation must be allowed even for the earliest versions of this catalogue, as the comparison of the two vases has shown.

Relatively short lists of genealogically related names are common in Greek mythology, but they frequently suffer abridgement when merged with more comprehensive catalogues. Various texts which list the sons of Hippokoon (Hippokoontids) or the sons of Thestios (Thestiadaï) are revealing in this regard. Both groups are mentioned in connection with the Calydonian boar

hunt, and some of their members double as Argonauts. The treatment of their names by poets and mythographers is far from uniform. Unlike the Hippokoontids, the Thestiadai are as often mentioned *en bloc*, ‘the sons of Thestios’, as they are by their individual names, depending on the preference of the author and on the context in which their names occur.⁵⁰ Authors mentioning the Thestiadai as part of a long catalogue of Calydonian hunters usually prefer the brevity of the generic name, whereas the individual names prevail in texts that are primarily interested in family history.⁵¹ All told more than fifteen different names are attested. They tend to occur in certain fixed groupings which seem to reflect distinct traditions. Klytios and Prokaon are grouped together in the earliest texts, as are Kometes and Prothoos.⁵² Later sources, however, ignore both pairs. Plexippos and Toxeus form another pair, which cannot be traced back beyond the Hellenistic period.⁵³ As usual, the fullest catalogues can be found in three of the later sources. They quote from four to seven names each, only three of which are identical in all three lists.⁵⁴ The ultimate origin of these lists must be sought in early epic treatments of the Meleagros myth.⁵⁵ For once the Hesiodic *Catalogue* can be ruled out as a source. The extant fragments suggest that the sons of Thestios must have been passed over in favour of his daughters.⁵⁶ All things considered, the names of the Thestiadai illustrate the unpredictable alternation of long and short lists of related names in our primary sources, an alternation which is still echoed in the mythographical tradition.

The Thestiadai are securely placed in the earliest non-Homeric accounts of the Calydonian hunt. The case is altogether different for the Hippokoontids, whose participation is not attested before Ovid and Hyginus.⁵⁷ Their combined testimony points to one or more distant Hellenistic sources which included the Hippokoontids in a catalogue of Calydonian hunters.⁵⁸ But the sons of Hippokoon are better known as victims of Herakles, who killed as many as ten or twelve of them when he restored Hippokoon’s brother Tyndareus to the kingdom of Lakedaïmon.⁵⁹ The fight against Herakles was their last hurrah, and it is in connection with their defeat and death at his hands that seventeen of their names, including several variant names, are mentioned.⁶⁰ Of the five names which survive in Aleman, our earliest source, only three recur in the two lists of much later date that are preserved in the mythographical tradition.⁶¹ One of those shared names, Sebrois, still appears in its original dialect form in the prose account of Pausanias. It is tempting to conclude that this picture reflects the gradual conflation of at least two separate traditions: a local Spartan catalogue of the Hippokoontids which is still available in Aleman’s *Partheneion*, and another more ‘Panhellenic’ catalogue which may have been derived from genealogical poetry of the Hesiodic type.

The close study of mythological names and their transition from the poetic into the mythographical tradition is admittedly tedious. Modern unease over the tedium of the various catalogues itemising the names of Aktaion’s dogs

provides a measure of the distance which separates epic decorum and the mark it left on ancient mythography from our own aesthetic sensibilities.⁶² At the same time such catalogues continue to be of interest as valuable heuristic tools which make it easier to see how specific mythological data derived from poetical accounts of the archaic or classical period were affected once they entered the mainstream of Greek mythography.

3. Applied Mythography: The Kallisto Myth

Although mythical names and genealogies deserve their share of scholarly attention, they are no longer the be-all and end-all of modern interest in Greek mythology. In the nineteenth century, however, there were periods when ‘mythologists’ of the calibre of Friedrich Gottlieb Welcker (1784–1868) and Hermann Usener (1834–1905) regarded the etymological interpretation of mythical names as the magical key that would unlock the hidden secrets of many myths, and when it was equally fashionable for eminent scholars of a different persuasion, including Karl Otfried Müller (1797–1840) and Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1848–1931), to concentrate their efforts on heroic families and to treat heroic myth as if it were tantamount to a historical record, full of more or less factual reminiscences of the distant past.⁶³ Nowadays the various etymologies of divine and heroic names which were once so hotly debated are all but forgotten, and myth is widely recognised as an autonomous mode of Greek thought and self-expression, distinct from historical memory and largely independent from it, even though myth often served as a substitute for history. Since the turn of the century the former preoccupation with isolated facets of Greek mythology has given way to a growing interest in myths as coherent narratives whose ritual and social significance transcends the literary context in which a given myth has been transmitted. In recent decades the foremost analysts of Greek myths have approached each mythical narrative as a cohesive and organised whole composed of constitutive elements which contribute to its overall structure and which are designed to bring out its inherent meaning. For all their differences, the dominant schools have much in common. ‘Ritualists’ like Walter Burkert tend to emphasise the social relevance of cult-oriented myths; ‘structuralists’ like Jean-Pierre Vernant read mythical texts as social documents that mirror the external and internal organisation of an entire society; and ‘narratologists’ who follow in the footsteps of Vladimir J. Propp (1895–1970) analyse the recurrent components of mythical narratives in terms of their sequential function.⁶⁴ What underlies their different approaches is a shared concern for the whole of the mythical narrative in relation to its constituent parts, and a willingness to pay equal attention to both. This new orientation has advanced our understanding of numerous Greek myths. But like any other method, it also has its pitfalls. Its practitioners do not always seem to realise that it is

impossible to determine the overall structure of a particular myth, let alone its presumed meaning, without acquiring first as complete and clear an understanding of its transmission in antiquity as possible. This is where mythography comes in. Given the present tendency to explore each conceivable facet of a given myth and to wring every last ounce of possible relevance from it, one would expect students of Greek myths to use the available mythographical sources with the same discrimination which they apply to Homer, Pindar, the tragedians, Callimachus or Ovid, and to examine the attestation, authenticity and approximate date of any piece of mythographical information that might be relevant to their interpretation. This, however, is not the case, and sheer ignorance of the whole range of ancient mythography has never been more rampant than it is today. Not everybody interested in Greek myth and religion can be expected to pursue the study of Greek mythography for its own sake. But all analysts and interpreters of Greek myths must be prepared to scrutinise their assumptions in the light of the mythographical tradition before general conclusions about the structure and meaning of any myth are in order.

Table 11.1 Variants of the Kallisto Myth

Sources	→	I	II	III
Story Pattern	↓	Eratothenic Catasterisms, Ursa Major = Hesiod fr. 163	Eratothenic Catasterisms, Ursa Major = Amphis fr. 47	Eratothenic Catasterisms, Ursa Major = Hesiod fr. 163
1. Kallisto's occupation		virgin huntress in Artemis' train	= I	= I
2. Zeus' appearance during union with Kallisto		his own (implied)	Artemis'	= I
3. Divine agent of animal transformation		Artemis	as in I	= I
4. Explanation for transformation		punishment for loss of virginity (cf. IV 8b)	punishment for blaming loss of virginity on Artemis	= I
5. Timing of transformation		after union with Zeus but before birth of Arkas	immediately before pregnancy or after giving birth	= I
6. Kallisto's death		= III	= III	Kallisto as bear almost shot by her son Arkas
7. Her ultimate fate		= III	= III	placed among the stars by Zeus

Sources	↑	IV Apollod. 3.100–101	V schol. D(A) <i>H.</i> 18.487 = Callimachus fr. 632	VI Paus. 8.3.6–7	VII Ovid (a) <i>Met.</i> 2.401–530 (b) <i>Fast.</i> 2.153–192
Story Pattern	↓				
1. Kallisto's occupation		as in I	—	—	as in I
2. Zeus' appearance during union with Kallisto		(a) as in II (b) Apollo's	as in I (implied)	as in I (implied)	(a) as in II (b) —
3. Divine agent of animal transformation		Zeus	Hera	as in V	as in V
4. Explanation for transformation		Zeus' attempt to deceive Hera	Hera's jealousy and vengeance (implied)	as in V (implied)	as in V (explicit)
5. Timing of transformation		as in I	—	as in I	after birth of Arkas
6. Kallisto's death		Kallisto as bear shot by Artemis (a) at Hera's request (as in V–VI) (b) as punishment for lost virginity (cf. I 4)	as in IV (a)	as in IV (a)	as in III
7. Her ultimate fate		as in III	as in III	as in III	as in III

This is the kind of source-critical scrutiny which I propose to call 'applied mythography'. Of those myths which have received such close attention more

than once, the story of Kallisto is particularly revealing. No single standard version of it existed in antiquity, but the recurrent elements of the myth which constitute its story pattern according to the principal versions (IV-VI) can be summarised as follows (see [Table 11.1](#), vertical readings):

A virgin nymph and fellow huntress of Artemis, Kallisto was seduced by Zeus. While pregnant she was transformed into a bear. After she had given birth to Arkas, she was shot to death by Artemis and placed among the stars by Zeus.

This summary leaves room for all kinds of elaborations and variations. Full-fledged versions of the Kallisto myth which tell her entire story from her innocent service of Artemis to her rape, animal transformation, death and ultimate catasterism are confined to the mythographical tradition (I-V) and to two relatively late storytellers, Ovid (VII) and Pausanias (VI), who drew upon various branches of this tradition for their portrayals of Kallisto (see Figure 11.1, horizontal readings). Without exception, the extant versions date from the imperial period, but they reproduce earlier treatments of the myth which range in date from the late archaic to the early Hellenistic period and which are either reported anonymously (IV, VI, VII) or ascribed to specific authors like ‘Hesiod’ (I = III), the middle comedy poet Amphis (II), and Callimachus (V). But the appeal to earlier authorities is deceptive. Source ascriptions found in the mythographical tradition are always suspect until proven accurate. In the absence of independent confirmation, which is usually unavailable, it is often impossible to decide whether the alleged authority is the source of the whole story or merely of one or two particular details, or even worse, whether that source may have told a different version of the same myth. The Kallisto myth is a conspicuous case in point. Because of the wide chronological distribution of its principal sources and the number of its variants, not to mention the serious difficulties which they raise, this myth has been a favorite battleground for modern ‘mythographers’, who have concentrated most of their efforts on the mechanical reconstruction of lost versions, those of ‘Hesiod’ and Callimachus in particular, without reaching much agreement.⁶⁵

At the centre of the ongoing discussion lies a conglomerate of different versions of the story of Kallisto and Arkas which are recorded in various Greek and Latin collections of constellation myths under the two neighbouring constellations of Ursa Major and Arktophylax (Boötes).⁶⁶ The Greek constellation myths are mainly found in MSS of Aratus, where they occur in two forms, either as a separate anonymous collection (Catast.) or interspersed with the scholia to Aratus proper (schol. Arat.). The mythical ‘tales’ (*historiai*) of the Mythographus Homericus provide an exact parallel for this type of transmission. The Latin collections are represented by the *Astronomy* of Hyginus (*Astr.*), the so-called Aratus Latinus (Arat. Lat.), and the scholia to Germanicus’ Latin adaptation of Aratus (schol. Germ.). Most of these texts were published synoptically by Carl Robert in 1878 and Ernst Maass in 1898.⁶⁷

But additional Greek sources have come to light in the meantime, and their importance is such that a new edition of the complete catasterismographic dossier is needed. It is essential to know that these texts fall into two fairly distinct groups. The principal sources (Group A) offer a fuller text than the rest, which suffered considerable abbreviation during the later imperial period. The abbreviated texts (Group B) omit, among other things, not only the Amphis version of the Kallisto myth (II) under Ursa Major but also the problematic reference to 'Hesiod' (fr. 163, right-hand column) under Arktophylax. Both groups are descended from a common ancestor, a Hellenistic collection of constellation myths which is no longer extant. Group B is represented by a collection of epitomised catasteristic myths known as the Epitome (Catast. Epit.), as well as by the majority of the schol. Arat. MSS. Group A consists mainly of the three Latin collections mentioned above, all of which include the Amphis version in one form or another. In addition, however, there is a second collection of Greek constellation myths which offers fewer myths but a more complete text than Catast. Epit. and which belongs also to Group A. This collection of excerpts (Catast. Exc.) includes the Arktophylax myth with the reference to 'Hesiod' but unfortunately omits Ursa Major.⁶⁸ Although Robert knew the Amphis version only from the Latin texts, he did not hesitate to assign it to the original Greek collection.⁶⁹ He was right, but it was not until 1974 that the Amphis version was first published in its Greek form from two rather untypical MSS of the schol. Arat., both of which contain constellation myths that show close affinities with the Greek as well as the Latin representatives of Group A.⁷⁰

The complex transmission of the various forms of the Kallisto myth in the catasterismographic tradition must be the starting point for any attempt to reconstruct the pre-Hellenistic versions of the myth and to interpret their meaning. The earliest known versions, apart from the puzzling account in Euripides' *Helen* 375ff where Kallisto's animal transformation seems to *precede* her mating with Zeus, are exactly those which the Greek ancestor of the extant collections of constellation myths ascribed to 'Hesiod' (under Ursa Major) and Amphis. The same ancestor contained numerous other references to early or rare authors and their works, including the *Naxiaka* of Aglaosthenes (*FGrH* 499 F 1–3), the *Herakles* of Antisthenes (fr. 24A Caizzi), the *Elegies Concerning Eros* of Artemidorus (*Suppl. Hell.* fr. 214 Lloyd-Jones/Parsons), the *Nemesis* of Cratinus (*PCG*, vol. IV, p. 179), the *On Justice* and the *Erotikos* of Heraclides Ponticus (frs. 51 and 66 Wehrli), an unknown work by Myrsilus of Methymna (*FGrH* 477 F 15), the *Herakleia* of Panyassis (frs. 3 and 10 Kinkel or Matthews) and of Peisander (fr. 1 Kinkel), and finally, the *pièce de résistance*, the *Crética* ascribed to Epimenides (3 B 23–5 Diels/Kranz).⁷¹ The nature and range of these quotations suggest strongly that the compilation was made in the early Hellenistic period by a well-read Alexandrian scholar who is often identified with Fratosthenes of Cyrene (third century BC) for reasons which are understandable but far from compelling.⁷² Whatever his name, our compiler

had access to at least two, possibly three different versions of the Kallisto myth, out of which he made one continuous account (I-III).⁷³ The Amphis version (II) was sandwiched as a mere variant between the Hesiodic version (I) and the catasterism proper (III). This peculiar arrangement has been a stumbling block for modern scholars who would like to know whether Kallisto's catasterism belongs to the Hesiodic version, to Amphis (highly unlikely), or to both, or whether it was taken from a third source.⁷⁴ In the absence of more explicit evidence, it is not at all certain that the catasterism was already known to 'Hesiod' (i.e. that it is pre-Hellenistic), nor is it safe to conclude from the dubious reference to Callimachus in version V that Kallisto's transportation into the skies was treated by him in detail, let alone that he invented it.⁷⁵ Regardless of its date, the catasterism is the most extraneous aspect of the myth. It has long been recognised that the story of Kallisto's offence and punishment must have existed prior to its connection with the constellation.⁷⁶ The original story pattern will have comprised, at the very least, the two elements which appear consistently in the written sources, the loss of virginity and the bear transformation. The catasterism, on the other hand, is an accretion of a well-known type which adds nothing of substance.

As told by the catasterismographers, the circumstances of the catasterism are extremely far-fetched and designed to explain the apparent pursuit of Ursa Major by Arktophylax in the sky. Some time after her transformation Kallisto was hunted by Arkas and took refuge in the sacred precinct (*abaton*) of Zeus Lykaeos. When the Arcadians prepared to kill them both, Zeus intervened and turned them into stars. Ovid (VI), who had access to a Greek collection of constellation myths similar to the ancestor of the extant *Catasterisms*, naturally made the most of the near-fatal confrontation between mother and son.⁷⁷ To complicate matters even further, Kallisto's ultimate fate is related twice in most branches of the catasterismographic tradition. In the second account (under Arktophylax) the catasterism of Kallisto and Arktos has been artificially combined with the notorious cannibalism committed by her father Lykaon. The victim is Arkas, who is restored to life by Zeus so that he can hunt his mother the bear. This curious combination of the Lykaon and Kallisto myths, which is unattested elsewhere, is hardly more than mythographical patchwork, designed to bring together under a single rubric everything that was known about the family of Lykaon.⁷⁸ In this connection the name of 'Hesiod' is mentioned again, evidently as a source for Lykaon's crime and not as an authority for the combined stories.⁷⁹ M. L. West believes, with K. O. Müller, Robert and Sale, that the complex of myths concerning Lykaon, Kallisto and Arkas appeared twice in 'Hesiod', in the *Catalogue* as well as the *Astronomy*.⁸⁰ It is impossible to assign the extant Hesiodic versions of the Kallisto myth to one work or the other with any confidence. It is equally impossible, therefore, to determine to what extent these two treatments overlapped or differed. Merkelbach and West assigned versions I and III as well as the Lykaon/Kallisto myth reported under Arktophylax to the *Catalogue* (fr.

163) rather than the *Astronomy*. But West now seems to think that the catasterismographers followed the *Astronomy*. If so, we know absolutely nothing about the Kallisto of the *Catalogue*, except that she was 'one of the nymphs' (Apollod. 3.100) and therefore presumably not the daughter of Lykaon. Faced with such insurmountable difficulties, students of the Kallisto myth who take the concept of applied mythography seriously will have to think twice before they reconstruct 'the original myth' from the elusive Hesiodic versions.⁸¹

Even though the myth can be traced back to 'Hesiod' in the late archaic period, it does not fully emerge from obscurity until we come to Amphis in the first half of the fourth century. It is hardly necessary to dwell on the Amphis version, which gave a decidedly humorous twist to the myth. According to Amphis, Zeus disguised himself as Artemis when he seduced Kallisto, who later blamed the virgin goddess for the pregnancy for which Zeus was responsible. One would like to know more. Is it at all conceivable, even in comedy, that Zeus managed to conceal his true identity during the actual rape, or is it more likely that Kallisto recognised her aggressor but maliciously chose to accuse Artemis of something that was so contrary to the goddess's own nature? In Ovid's clever imitation (VIIa) the truth surely comes out *in flagrante delicto*, as was to be expected. But then Ovid's Kallisto does not put the blame on Artemis. Apart from its adaptation by Ovid, Amphis' comic parody is of marginal interest for the study of the myth in its more serious form.⁸²

The three remaining versions (IV-VI) have much in common and derive from the same mythographical source, either the Mythographus Homericus or the hypothetical 'Hellenistic handbook' (above, I). Invariably Kallisto is possessed by Zeus, changed into a bear by Zeus or Hera (*not* by Artemis), shot by Artemis at Hera's request, and put among the stars. It is widely held that the common source reproduced the Kallisto myth as told by some Hellenistic poet, which is plausible in the light of Ovid's imitation (VII), and that this poet was Callimachus, which is less plausible.⁸³ Pausanias (VI) and the Homeric scholiast (V) differ in length but not in substance, except for the rescue of Kallisto's unborn child, which is reported differently in versions IV and VI but omitted by the scholiast. In his usual manner, Apollodorus (IV) clutters his account with several variants, but he fails to tell us where he found them. He alone reports (IV 2b) that Zeus disguised himself as Apollo when he approached Kallisto. Given her constitutional aversion to male company, it is difficult to see how she would have let any man come within sight of her, even Artemis' brother. Still, a Hellenistic poet (not necessarily the same as the one mentioned before) might have thought otherwise, but he would have been more reluctant to attribute the paternity of Arkas to Apollo than Reinhold Franz, who announced the marriage of Kallisto and Apollo in 1890. This genealogical construction, which is based on Tzetzes' misreading of Apollodorus, has been revived in recent years and even used as evidence for

the religious history of Arcadia.⁸⁴

The most striking feature of versions IV-VII is the intervention of Hera. The motif of Zeus' deceived and jealous wife is more firmly rooted in the myths of Semele and Io, whence it was transferred to the Kallisto myth. In all three cases, Ovid (VII) outdid his predecessors in exploiting the psychological potential inherent in the triangle of husband, wife and mistress. Once Hera appeared on the scene, the role of Artemis had to be drastically diminished. Instead of being the divine protagonist, she now became Hera's creature. Her implacable wrath, which is so prominent in versions I-II, was either suppressed altogether (V-VI) or reduced to a mere mythographical variant (IV). Only Ovid has it both ways, as often, and manipulates Artemis' anger to set the stage for a massive display of Hera's jealousy. The prominent place assigned to Hera in the 'Alexandrian' version of the Kallisto myth makes for excellent poetry, but it leaves the original substance of the myth greatly impoverished. The conceptual connection between the virgin goddess, the loss of virginity, and the bear transformation of the new mother has been blurred almost beyond recognition. What had once been a unique and exemplary story of a maiden's dramatic transition to motherhood emerges from the Hellenistic reinterpretation as a conventional, if one-sided, love affair complicated by the marital dispute between Zeus and Hera.

Given the relatively late date of the available sources, it is impossible to reconstruct 'the original myth' of Kallisto with absolute certainty. But the concept of applied mythography, once followed through, makes it much easier to determine the narrative function and, if possible, the origin of each variant and to separate the consistent elements of the myth, which form its permanent core (to the extent that we are ever likely to know it), from more incidental features which owe their existence to literary convention or individual taste. Our mythographical analysis has shown that the following variables can be safely detached from the main story pattern: the disguise used by Zeus to deceive Kallisto (II 2, IV 2ab, VII 2a); the explanation for Artemis' wrath as found in Amphis (II 4); the jealousy of Hera (V-VII 4), and her active role in both the animal transformation (V-VII 3) and eventual death (IV-VI 6a) of Kallisto; and finally, Zeus rather than Hera as the agent of the bear metamorphosis (IV 3-4), a variation which implies Hera's jealousy and foreshadows her revenge.⁸⁵ The catasterism (III-VII), however, which forms the conclusion of the myth in all but the two earliest versions (I-II), is inseparable from the Hellenistic conception of Kallisto's ultimate fate. Yet it too must be set aside, as we have seen, as an accretion, the kind of stellar coda which this myth shares with all the other constellation myths. Once these embellishments have been removed, the substance of the myth remains. Apart from Zeus, who acts as a mere catalyst, the essential components have to do exclusively with Kallisto and Artemis. Their relationship is described as a series of three interconnected events, all of which affect Kallisto more directly than Artemis: the loss of virginity, the bear transformation, and the violent

death. These three elements have been the main concern of modern interpreters for the past 160 years. Although their conclusions differ substantially, they all put the emphasis, in one way or another, on the transition from virginity to motherhood; on the significance of the bear (*arktos*), either as a 'sacred animal' or as a theriomorphic symbol of a particular biological or social status; and thirdly, on the conceptual link between the loss of virginity, animal transformation, and death. Today social interpretations prevail, and Kallisto is widely seen as the mythical model for the initiation of female adolescents into their adult roles, by analogy with the Attic 'bear-ritual' (*arkteia*), during which groups of prepubescent girls would 'play the bear' (*arkteuein*) in various sanctuaries of Artemis. Unattested in the ancient sources, the connection between the *arkteia* and the Kallisto myth, though hypothetical, rests on close structural similarities.⁸⁶ The case has been strengthened by the recent discovery of an Attic vase which shows Artemis shooting an arrow on one side and a mature woman and a younger man both wearing bear-masks on the other side.⁸⁷ This vase has the same shape as the numerous vases with representations of the ritual 'bear-girls' (*arktoi*) that were found in temples of Artemis throughout Attica. If the masquerade had both a ritual purpose and a mythical reference, it is tempting to connect it with the Kallisto myth and to assume that her bear transformation was re-enacted in the context of the *arkteia*. The woman would represent Kallisto, the bear-mother, and the young man would impersonate Arkas, the eponymous 'bear-man'.

While the mythographical approach cannot contribute directly to the process of extrapolating the meaning or function of a given myth from its narrative content, it can and must serve as a safeguard against interpretations which are based on distorted conclusions drawn from incomplete evidence. The lack of consensus concerning the death of Kallisto illustrates this point. Most interpreters assume that Kallisto's animal transformation functions as a prelude to her execution by Artemis. If Kallisto's death does indeed constitute the climax of this myth, it must by definition belong to the earliest-known versions. For this reason its occurrence in 'Hesiod' is often taken for granted, and rightly so, even though there is no direct proof.⁸⁸ Against this it has been argued that the form of the myth 'in which she was both changed [into a bear] and shot was late', and what is more, that her death at the hands of Artemis is, strictly speaking, incompatible with her transformation into a bear by the same goddess.⁸⁹ The first objection, raised by Sale, begs the question as long as Kallisto's ultimate fate in the pre-Hellenistic versions of the myth remains unknown. Those who wish to argue, as Franz and Sale did, that in 'the Arcadian version' (a modern construct) Kallisto retained her human form while being shot by Artemis take recourse to two types of Arcadian coins from the fourth century BC which show Artemis shooting (obverse) and a purely human Kallisto transfixed by an arrow and accompanied by Arkas (reverse).⁹⁰ The absence of animal features may merely reflect dislike of a theriomorphic

Kallisto on the part of this particular artist.⁹¹ The degree to which representations of Kallisto in art were indeed affected by personal taste is well illustrated by four Apulian vases and vase fragments which are roughly contemporary with the Arcadian coins.⁹² On three of the vases, Kallisto is shown in the process of being transformed into a bear, whereas the fourth vase shows her without animal features.⁹³ Unlike the die-makers, however, the vase painters tended to separate the motherhood of Kallisto from her death. Arkas appears on at least three of the four vases (one of the two fragments, Boston MFA 13.206 = *LIMC* Artemis 1388, is too small to judge), whereas Artemis is visible on only one vase, definitely absent on another, and not in evidence on the two fragments. Taken as a whole, then, the iconographical repertoire is too ambiguous to serve as a reliable substitute for lost versions of the myth. To answer the second objection, it should be sufficient to point out that no written form of the myth exists in which the bear transformation does not precede Kallisto's death. In addition, there is the parallel myth of Aktaion, whom Artemis transforms into a stag before he is killed by his own dogs, occasionally with the assistance of Artemis and her arrows, as on the Boston bell krater (c. 470 BC) from which the Pan painter derives his name.⁹⁴ Far from being a duplication of effort or, in narrative terms, a conflation of two variant modes of punishment, the combination of animal transformation and violent death confirms the persistent influence of hunting rituals on the religious mentality of the Greeks during the formative phase of their myth-making.⁹⁵

Although the death of Kallisto is firmly established in the mainstream of the mythographical tradition, it is prevented for sentimental reasons in the catasteristic version (III, imitated by VII), in which Kallisto's son Arkas has taken the place of Artemis as the hunter who pursues the human bear, his own mother. It follows that the combination of death and catasterism in versions IV-VI is a secondary development, even though Orion too died before he was transformed into a constellation.⁹⁶ The remarkable prevention of Kallisto's death in the Alexandrian collection of catasterisms is clearly a special case which does not support the view that the bear transformation is structurally detachable from the actual killing. In the final analysis, the combined mythographical and iconographical evidence, though fragmentary and inconsistent, seems to bear out those scholars who have always insisted on a close connection between Kallisto's bear transformation and her death as a bear.

The preceding studies, however limited in scope, illustrate three different but connected aspects of Greek mythography: the nature of the relevant sources, the heuristic value of mythographical names, and, as the ultimate goal, the concept of applied mythography, which is instrumental in establishing the essential elements of a given myth. Large areas of the history of Greek mythography are still unexplored, and several important collections of myths lie ignored. Modern interpreters of Greek myths must constantly re-examine

and strengthen the old foundations. If not, they build castles in the air.

Notes

1. P. Köln III 126 = H. Lloyd-Jones and P. Parsons, *Supplementum Hellenisticum* (Berlin and New York, 1983) no. 903A. Cf. Lloyd-Jones, 'The Meropis (SH 903A)', *Atti del XVII Congresso Internazionale di Papirologia*, I (Naples, 1984) 141–50; A. Henrichs, 'Philodemos De Pietate als mythographische Quelle', *Cronache Ercolanesi*, 5 (1975) 5–38; below, note 27.

2. Cf. C. Wendel, 'Mythographie', *RE* 16.2 (1935) 1352–74; U. v. Wilamowitz, 'Die griechische Heldensage I–II', *Kleine Schriften*, V 2 (Berlin, 1937) 54–126; R. Häussler, 'Grundzüge antiker Mythographie', in W. Killy (ed.), *Mythographie der frühen Neuzeit. Ihre Anwendung in den Künsten*, Wolfenbütteler Forschungen, 27 (Wiesbaden, 1984) 1–23 (with useful bibliography).

3. *FGrH* 12. Asclepiades' *Tragodoumena* is a distant ancestor of the anonymous plot summaries (*hypotheseis*) for the major tragedians which have come to light on papyrus and which are an important source for the mythology of the classical period. See now P. Oxy. 52.3650–3; R. Kassel, 'Hypothesis', in W.J. Aerts *et al.* (eds), *Scholia. Studia D. Holwerda oblata* (Groningen, 1985) 53–9.

4. C. Wendel, 'Überlieferung und Entstehung der Theokrit-Scholien', *Abh. Kon. Ges. Wiss. Göttingen*, Phil.-hist. Kl., N. F. 17.2 (Berlin, 1920) esp. 90–102.

5. Cf. most recently F. Montanari, 'Revisione di *PBerol.* 13282. Le *historiae fabulares* omeriche su papiro', in *Atti del XVII Congresso Internazionale di Papirologia*, II (Naples, 1984) 229–42; B. Kramer and D. Hagedorn, *Griechische Papyri der Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg*, Papyrologische Texte und Abhandlungen, 31 (Bonn, 1984) 25–34 (with full bibliography).

6. Edited by R. Wagner as volume I of the *Mythographi Graeci* (2nd edn, Leipzig, 1926). The most useful mythographical commentary presently available is not to be found in J. G. Frazer's famous but disorganised notes attached to his Loeb edition (2 vols, London, 1921), but in the translations of K. Aldrich (Lawrence, Kansas, 1975) and M. Simpson (Amherst, Mass., 1976). The author of the *Library* (henceforth *Apollod.*) is not the same as his Hellenistic namesake, Apollodorus of Athens; cf. A. Diller, 'The Text of the Bibliotheca of Pseudo-Apollodorus', *Tr. Am. Phil. Ass.*, 66 (1935) 296–313. On the *Library* see E. Schwartz, 'Apollodorus', *RE* 1.2 (1894) 2875–86, repr. in *Griechische Geschichtsschreiber* (Leipzig, 1957) 207–23; Wilamowitz, *Kleine Schriften*, V 2, 68–76, 149–56.

7. Photius, *Bibl. cod.* 186, published with French translation by R. Henry, *Photius, Bibliothèque*, III (Paris, 1962) 8–39, whose notes merely summarise Hoefer (below); F. Jacoby used Martini's collations for his 1923 edition in *FGrH* 26 F 1 (with less than a page of commentary). Henry's edition provides the fullest information on the text of the two principal MSS but ignores important emendations, which Jacoby reports. P. Oxy. 52.3648 (second century AD), edited by M. A. Harder in 1984, preserves a much fuller version of substantial portions of *Dieg.* 46–7 than Photius. The papyrus is evidently part of a professional copy of the original work, whose style is exactly as Photius described it: charming and periodic but occasionally a little convoluted (*FGrH* 26 T 1). Cf. U. Hoefer, *Konon. Text und Quellenuntersuchung* (Greifswald, 1890) 30–113 (a comprehensive but highly speculative source-critical study of all but three of the fifty stories); Martini, *RE* 11.2 (1922) 1335–8 (mainly on Conon's style and sources, along the lines suggested by Hoefer). The title *Diegeseis* (i.e. *narrationes*) was also applied in antiquity to prose summaries of poetic works such as Homer's *Odyssey* and Callimachus' collected poems; see R. Pfeiffer, *A History of Classical Scholarship*, I (Oxford, 1968) 195.

8. *Cononis narrationes* L. Ex Photii Bibliotheca editit et adnotationibus illustravit Io. Arnoldus Kanne. *Praefixa est epistola ad Heynium. Adiectum Chr. G. Heynii spicilegium observationum in Cononem* (Göttingen, 1798) 59–167 (Kanne's commentary) and 168–82 (Heyne's notes). Kanne's model was Heyne's own *Apollodori Atheniensis Bibliothecae libri tres* (Göttingen, 1782–3, in two volumes; 2nd edn 1803, repr. Hildesheim 1972; only the text of the second edition was reprinted, not the more than 400 pages of exegetical notes and indices). Kanne was a voluminous writer whose far-fetched oriental etymologies of Greek mythological names were notorious, cf. A. Henrichs, 'Welckers Götterlehre', in W. M. Calder III *et al.* (eds), *Friedrich Gottlieb Welcker. Werk und Wirkung* (Stuttgart, 1986) 179–229, at n 11.

9. P. Vidal-Naquet, 'The Black Hunter and the Origin of the Athenian Ephebeia', in R. L. Gordon (ed.), *Myth, Religion and Society* (Cambridge and Paris, 1981) 147–62, at 150 (= P. Vidal-Naquet, *Le Chasseur noir*, 2nd edn (Paris, 1983) 156), in a discussion of the myth of Xanthos and Melanthos, the aetiological explanation of the Apaturia, for which Conon (*Dieg.* 39) is our earliest direct source.

10. *Dieg.* 2–4,8, 12–14, 19, 21, 28–9, 36–7, 41, 46–7 (cf. P. Oxy. 3648), 48. Cf. P. M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic*

Alexandria, I (Oxford, 1972), 513f; F. Prinz, *Gründungs-mythen und Sagenchronologie* (Munich, 1979).

11. *Dieg.* 6 (oracle of Clarian Apollo; cf. Apollod. Epit. 6.2–4); 11 (Lindian sacrifice; cf. Callim. *Ait.* frs 7.20 and 22–3; Apollod. 2.118); 15 (cult of Demeter at Pheneos, Arcadia; cf. Paus. 8.15.4); 17 (local cult of Herakles in Thessaly); 19 (Linos song and Argive festival called Amis, with dog sacrifices; cf. Callim. *Ait.* frs 26–31; according to the *Diegesis* in P. Oxy. 20.2263 = *FGrH* 305 F 8bis, Callimachus' source was the history of Argos by Agios/Dercylus; see Wilamowitz, *Kleine Schriften*, V 2, 108–13, and R. Pfeiffer, *Callimachus*, II (Oxford 1951) 107f); 20 (Thracian hero cult); 24 (Narcissus and cult of Eros in Thespiæ; cf. Paus. 9.31.7; B. Manuwald, 'Narcissus bei Konon und Ovid', *Hermes*, 103 (1975) 349–72; Pellizer, this volume, Ch. 6); 30 (sacred sheep of Helios in Apollonia, Illyria; cf. Hdt. 9.93f); 33 (cult of Leukothea in Miletus and oracle of Didymean Apollo; cf. Callim. fr. 229); 35 (cult of Apollo Gypaieus at Ephesus, otherwise unknown); 44 (oracle of Didymean Apollo); 45 (= O. Kern, *Orphicorum fragmenta* (Berlin, 1922) *testim.* 115; the fullest Greek account of the death of Orpheus, at Leibethra, Pieria, and his subsequent cult there, from which women were excluded, Graf, this volume, Ch. 5, section 5; on the sacrifices to Orpheus, not mentioned elsewhere, see J. Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, 3rd edn (Cambridge, 1922) 467–9); 49 (cult of Apollo Aigletēs on Anaphe, founded by the returning Argonauts; cf. Callim. *Ait.* frs 7.19 and 21; Ap. Rhod. 4.1694ff; Apollod. 1.139; below, note 20). Conon appears to have used local histories rather than Callimachus, in which case his information on Greek religion is particularly valuable.

12. Byblis and Kaunos: *Dieg.* 2; Parth. *Erot. Path.* 11; Ovid *Met.* 9.454–665; Ant. Lib. *Met.* 30; cf. F. Bömer, *P. Ovidius Naso. Metamorphosen Buch VIII-IX* (Heidelberg, 1977) 41 If. Pallene and Kleitos: *Dieg.* 10; Parth. 6 = Hegesippus *FGrH* 391 F 2 (below, note 17). Oinone and Paris: *Dieg.* 23; Parth. 4; Ovid *Her.* 5; cf. Apollod. 3.154f.

13. *Dieg.* 28 ('Tennes' axe'; Paus. 10.14.3f gives the same combination of myth and proverb as Conon), 34 ('Diomedean pressure'). Cf. E. Leutsch and F. G. Schneidewin, *Corpus Paroemiographorum Graecorum*, vol. I (Göttingen, 1839) Index 499 and 517, vol. II (1851) Index 800 and 827; Hesych. D. 1881, T 473; O. Crusius, 'Paroemiographica. Textgeschichtliches, zur alten Dichtung und Religion', *SB Kæn. Bay. Ak. Wiss., Phil.-hist. Kl.* 1910, 4. Abh.; W. Bühler, *Zenobii Athoi Proverbia*, vol. 4 (Göttingen, 1982).

14. *Dieg.* 5 (a cicada assists a cithara-player; cf. Timaeus *FGrH* 566 F 43); 22 (a snake saves its master; cf. Ael. Var. *Hist.* 13.46); 43 (the lava of Mt Aetna spares two pious sons; see W. Theiler, *Poseidonios. Die Fragmente*, 2 (Berlin and New York, 1982) 53 on F 42). Cf. A. Giannini, *Paradoxographorum Graecorum reliquiae* (Milan, 1966); Callim. fr. 407 (a collection of regional *paradoxa*, preserved by Antigonus of Carystus, a younger contemporary of Callimachus).

15. *Dieg.* 1 (Midas' gold and long ears); 37 (the earthborn Spartoi of Thebes); 40 (Andromeda's sea-monster was a ship named Ketos whose crew was rigid with fear of Perseus, whence the myth of Gorgo's petrifying head; cf. Paleaph. 37). See J. S. Rusten, *Dionysius Scytobrachion*, *Papyrologica Coloniensis*, 10 (Opladen, 1982) esp. 93ff; Palaephatus *Peri Apiston* has been edited by N. Festa, *Mythographi Graeci*, III 2 (Leipzig, 1902).

16. *Dieg.* 38 (about a banker who tries in vain to cheat a friend out of his deposit; cf. Hdt. 6.86); 42 (Stesichorus' *ainos* about the power of the tyrant; cf. Philistus *FGrH* 556 F 6; Aristotle *Rhet.* 2.20, 1393b9ff).

17. On Conon's Thracian connection see Jacoby on *FGrH* 391; R. B. Egan, 'Aeneas at Aineia and Vergil's *Aeneid*', *Pacific Coast Philology*, 9 (1974) 37–47. Hoefer, *Konon*, 53–68 assigned eight of Conon's Thracian stories to Hegesippus, including the love story of Pallene and Kleitos also told by Parthenius (above, note 12). In the single MS of Parthenius, two sources are given for this story, Hegesippus' *Palleniaka* (*FGrH* 391 F 2) as well as Theagenes (774 F 17), author of *Makedonika*. The source ascriptions in Parthenius, like similar *Quellenangaben* in other mythographers such as the Mythographus Homerici (above, note 5), are not necessarily reliable. In the case of Parthenius, however, they are unusually specific, and most scholars accept them as accurate references to texts in which the myth in question was discussed, whether Parthenius actually used them as sources or not. Cf. C. Wendel, *Gnomon*, 8 (1932) 148–54; V. Bartoletti, *RFIC*, 76 (1948) 34f; R. Kassel, *Rhein. Mus.*, 117 (1974) 191.

18. Unless this has been done in the unpublished dissertation by R. B. Egan, 'The Diegesis of Konon', University of Southern California (Los Angeles, 1971, *Diss. Abstr.* 32 (1971) 939A), which is said to include text, translation and commentary.

19. *Dieg.* 4 (the eponymous hero of Olynthos killed by a lion); 35 and 44 (above, note 11; the rival *genos* of the Euangelidai does not seem to occur outside Conon).

20. *Dieg.* 49, with the parallels noted above, note 11. Cf. H. Fluck, *Skurille Riten in griechischen Kulte*, *Diss. Freiburg* (Eningen, 1931) 59–62; J. S. Rusten, *HSCP*, 81 (1977) 157–61; Burkert, *OE*, 76f (but see the critique by G. Neumann, *Zs.j. vergl. Sprachforschung*, 98 (1985) 306).

21. *Dieg.* 16. Cf. Strabo 10.4.12 from Theophrastus, *Peri Eros* (where the *erastēs* is called Euxynthetos,

as in Plut. *Amat.* 20, 766D); Eth. *Eud.* 3.1, 1229a21 (where the *erastēs* is a nameless but 'fabled' [*mythologoumenos*] man from Crete; no details are given). K. J. Dover, *Greek Homosexuality* (Oxford, 1978) 51 mistakenly places Canon's story 'in late antiquity' and underestimates its interest.

22. Only various partial editions exist, including F. Creuzer's of 1817. Cf. S. Brock, *The Syriac Version of the Pseudo-Nonnos Mythological Scholia* (Cambridge, 1971). Brock's superior edition also gives the Greek text of some of the scholia.

23. M. L. West, *The Hesiodic Catalogue of Women. Its Nature, Structure and Origins* (Oxford, 1985).

24. P. Vindob. Gr. inv. 26727 lines 5–8, edited by P. J. Sijpesteijn and K. A. Worp, *Chronique d'Egypte* 97–8 (1974) 317–24. Doros' descendants are described in P. Turner 1 = Hesiod fr. 10a. 1–19; cf. West, *Hesiodic Catalogue*, 59.

25. P. Mich. inv. 1447, edited by T. Renner, *HSCP*, 82 (1978) 277–93, with important commentary. The three Hesiodic fragments have been reprinted by Merkelbach and West in the OCT Hesiod (2nd edn, Oxford, 1983, pp. 231f, frs 10(d), 188A and 217A). Cf. West, *Hesiodic Catalogue*, 60f (Aiolos' daughters), 88 (Aktaion, whose inclusion in the *Catalogue* as the suitor of Semele was unknown before the publication of the Michigan papyrus), and 99 (Arethousa, the third Hesiodic entry in the dictionary).

26. See above, note 1.

27. A. Henrichs, 'Ein Meropiszitat in Philodems *De Pietate*', *Cronache Ercolanesi*, 7 (1977) 124–5. The lines of the Philodemus passage which precede the reference to Asteros and the *Meropis* continue to qualify as a fragment of the *Great Ehoiai*, but the printed version (Hes. fr. 363A) needs revision in light of the new readings.

28. P. Cornell 55 (Pack² 2646), published by W. L. Westermann and C. L. Kraemer, Jr, *Greek Papyri in the Library of Cornell University* (New York, 1926) 246. The Cornell papyri are now housed in the Michigan collection at Ann Arbor. Professor L. Koenen was kind enough to examine the papyrus for me.

29. For the genealogies of Musaios and Eumolpus see A. Henrichs, 'Zur Genealogie des Musaios', *ZPE*, 58 (1985) 1–8 (where references to the Cornell papyrus should be added in notes 6 and 9). Rhadamanthys, son of Zeus and Europe: *Il.* 14.321 f, in an enumeration of Zeus' liaisons with mortal women which reflects the tradition of the *Hesiodic Catalogue*. Trophonios, son of Apollo: Philodemus, *On Piety* (P. Here. 243 III 27f, published by A. Henrichs, *Gr. Rom. Byz. Stud.*, 13 (1972) 86ff and W. Luppe, *Cronache Ercolanesi*, 14 (1984) 118ff), a genealogy ultimately derived from the *Catalogue* via Apollodoros of Athens; Paus. 9.37.5; Philostr. *VA* 8.19; schol. *Ar. Nu.* 506; cf. Charax *FGrH* 103 F 5.

30. Paus. 1.14.3 reports four genealogies for Triptolemos: (1) son of Keleos according to the Athenians; cf. the Parian Marble *FGrH* 239 A 12; (2) son of Okeanos and Ge according to Musaios (2 B 10 Diels/Kranz = Orph. fr. 51 Kern); cf. Apollod. 1.32 = Pherecydes *FGrH* 3 F 53, where several MSS offer Uranos side by side with Okeanos as variant names for Triptolemos' father; (3) son of Dysaules according to Orpheus (= Orph. fr. 51 Kern); (4) son of Raros and of Amphiktyon's daughter according to Choerilus (*TGrF* 2 F 1). Recent editors of Apollod. 1.32 either reject (Wagner) or ignore (Frazer) the variant *Ouranou*, which explains why it has been overlooked (below, note 31). The Cornell papyrus supports *Ouranou*. If dated correctly in the 'early first century (A.D.)' by its editors, the text of the papyrus (*Ouranou*) could claim greater antiquity, and perhaps more authority, than the readings presented by the *Library (Ouranou/Okeanou)* or Pausanias (*Okeanou*).

31. Cf. R. Janko, 'Forgetfulness in the Golden Tablets of Memory', *CQ*, 33 (1985) 89–100, esp. 95 (where the various hexametrical versions of the genealogy are conveniently collected and discussed). As far as I can see, the striking coincidence between the claim of the initiates on the gold tablets and the genealogy of Triptolemos as reported in the Cornell papyrus and in the alternate text of Apollod. 1.32 has not been noticed in the vast literature on the subject. Uranos and Ge appear in several Orphic theogonies as the first couple (cf. M. L. West, *The Orphic Poems* (Oxford, 1983) 71 and 235), whereas the pair Okeanos/Ge seems to be unparalleled.

32. For an exhaustive discussion see F. Graf, *Eleusis und die orphische Dichtung Athens in vorhellenistischer Zeit* (Berlin and New York, 1974). Graf too ignored the Cornell papyrus and its genealogies, several of which accord well with his general thesis.

33. Graf, *Eleusis*, 121–6 on Rhadamanthys and Triptolemos as judges of the dead. The Boeotian Trophonios looks like an intruder in this Eleusinian company, but he too could have been drawn into the circle of Orpheus or Musaios before the Hellenistic period and without the knowledge of Pausanias, who is our principal source on Trophonios (9.39.5–14). Demeter surnamed Europe was known at Lebadeia as Trophonios' nurse (Paus. 9.39.5). If this connection is old, it could have facilitated the induction of Trophonios into Eleusinian literature.

34. Graf, *Eleusis*, 158–181; cf. M. Olender, 'Aspects de Baubō', *Rev. Hist. Rel.*, 202 (1985) 3–55, esp. 13f and 28–30. Dysaules and Baubo are husband and wife in Asclepiades *FGrH* 12 F 4 (cf. Palaephatus *FGrH* 44 F 1). Their relationship is perhaps implied by Clement of Alexandria *Protr.* 2.20.2 (= Orph. fr. 52 Kern),

where Baubo, Dysaulas and Triptolemos appear as a connected series of names in a list of Eleusinian autochthons. B[r]auro in the Cornell papyrus is probably a mistake for Baubo, which may have been caused by confusion with Brauron in Attica, famous for its cult of Artemis. The only attested bearer of the name Brauro is the wife of the Edonian king Pittakos (Thuc. 4.107.3). If Thracian, however, the new name of Dysaulas' wife could be interpreted as further evidence of Thracian ancestors in Eleusinian genealogies; cf. Orpheus, Musaios and Eumolpos (Jan Bremmer).

35. The epic spelling Antiphemos in Paus. 10.5.6 and 10.12.11 (in both cases as father of Musaios) and more appropriately in *Orph. Arg.* 310 recalls Herodotus 7.153.1, where Antiphemos the founder of Gela (cf. Paus. 8.46.2) appears as Antiphemos in all MSS.

36. For instance Iphiklos, son of Phylakos (A.R. 1.45–8, Hyg. *Fab.* 14.2) versus Iphiklos the Thestiad (A.R. 1.201, Hyg. *Fab.* 14.17). Cf. O. Jessen, *Prolegomena in catalogum Argonautarum* (Diss. Berlin, 1889); C. Robert, 'Der Argonautenkatalog in Hygins Fabelbuch', *Nachr. Kön. Ges. Wiss. Göttingen*, Philhist. Kl. (1918) 4, 469–500; M. W. Haslam on P. Oxy. 53.3702 fr. 2.

37. Paus. 8.15.6–7.

38. Apollod. 1.63 and Hes. fr. 10a.49.

39. Apollod. 2.117 and Pherecydes *FGrH* 3 F 17.

40. Apollod. 3.124 and Paus. 3.15.1.

41. Apollod. 3.48; schol. Tzetzes *Ar. Nu.* 506; cf. Bremmer, this volume, [Ch. 3](#), on variations in women's names.

42. Schol. D. *Il.* 9.145; Hes. fr. 23a.17; *Cypria* fr. 14 Bethe = fr. 15 Allen.

43. *ABV*, 23; Ovid *Met.* 8.306. Even the longest catalogues (Apollod. 1.67; Hyg. *Fab.* 173) omit this name. Cf. Bömer, *Metamorphosen Buch VIII–IX*, 108–9; A. Stewart, 'Stesichoros and the François Vase', in W. G. Moon (ed.), *Ancient Greek Art and Iconography* (Madison, Wisconsin, 1983) 53–74, esp. 63 (with bibliography); G. Daltrop, *Die Kalydonische Jagd in der Antike* (Hamburg and Berlin, 1966) 15–21, with plates 2 and 4; A. Surber, *Die Meleagersage. Eine historisch-uergleichende Untersuchung zur Bestimmung der Quellen von Ovidi met. VIII. 270–546* (Diss. Zurich, 1880) 97–106. Akastos, one of the Argonauts (Paus. 1.18.1), also arranged the funeral games for his father Pelias (on the Amphiaraios krater, below, note 49; Hyg. *Fab.* 273.10).

44. Eur. fr. 530 Nauck².

45. Bern, private collection (R. Blatter, *Ant. Kunst*, 5, 1962, 45–7); Bacch. 5.117; Bömer on Ovid *Met.* 8.315; G. Arrigoni in *Scripta Philologia*, 1 (Milan, 1977) 19–20. Antaios (François vase), which is usually taken as a misspelling of Ankaïos, could be a genuine variant name.

46. Apollod. 3.106 and 3.164.

47. Hyg. *Fab.* 273.10–11; P. Strasb. W. G. 332 (Pack² 2452), edited by J. Schwartz, 'Une source papyrologique d'Hygin le mythographe', *Studi in onore di Aristide Calderini e Roberto Paribeni*, II (Milan, 1957) 151–6, revised by S. Daris, *Aegyptus*, 39 (1959) 18–21. The other papyrus will be published by Dr M. A. Harder in a future volume of the *Oxyrhynchus Papyri*. It contains a series of mythographical catalogues comparable to those in the Strasbourg papyrus (in which a catalogue of the Muses and their liaisons precedes the victors at the funeral games for Pelias) and to the *Indices* in Hyg. *Fab.* 221ff. Schwartz suggested that the Strasbourg papyrus preserves the original Greek text of Hyginus. The Oxyrhynchus papyrus disproves the theory of a Greek Hyginus, while it reinforces the assumption of one or more Greek sources for the *Indices* in Hyginus. P. Med. Inv. 123 (below, note 62) is also related to the *Indices*.

48. Paus. 5.17.9–10. Cf. Stesich. fr. 1–3 (178–80) Page.

49. The two charioteers are Admetos and Euphemos. For the Amphiaraios krater (lost, formerly Berlin F 1655) see F. Hauser in A. Furtwangler and K. Reichhold, *Griechische Vasenmalerei*, vol. III (Munich, 1932) 7, with plates 121–2, and D. A. Amyx, 'Archaic Vase-Painting vis-à-vis "Free" Painting at Corinth', in Moon (ed.) *Ancient Greek Art and Iconography*, 37–52, with plate 3.2b.

50. Surber, *Meleagersage*, 94–6; add Stesich. fr. 45 (222) Page, Bacch. 5.93ff and 25. Iff.

51. Eur. fr. 534.6ff. Nauck² (generic name); Ovid *Met.* 8.304 *duo Thestiadae* (identified as Plexippus and Toxeus 8.440f; below, note 53); Apollod. 1.62 (individual names), 1.68, 71–3 (generic name). Stesich. fr. 45, Paus. 8.45.6 and Hyg. *Fab.* 173 (below, note 57), who mention several 'sons of Thestios' by name, have it both ways.

52. The first pair appears in Stesich. fr. 45 and Bacch. 25.29 (formerly Pindar fr. 343 Snell), whence schol. T *Il.* 9.567; for the second pair see Paus. 8.45.6 (in a description of sculptures by Skopas, from the early fourth century BC). The representation of Calydonian hunters in pairs was a feature of archaic art.

53. Schol. A. R. 1.199/201b; Ovid *Met.* 8.440f. Other sources mention Plexippos alone (Antiphon *TGrF* 55 F lb) or in combination with Calydonian hunters other than Toxeus (Hyg. *Fab.* 173; below, note 54).

54. Eurypylos, Iphiklos the Argonaut (above, note 36), and Plexippos. Cf. Apollod. 1.62, schol. D(A) *Il.*

9.567 and P. Vindob. Gr. inv. 26727 lines 17–21 (from a collection of mythological genealogies; above, note 24).

55. Surber, *Meleagersage*, 16–18; Wilamowitz, *Kleine Schriften*, V 2, 88–90; West, *Hesiodic Catalogue*, 114f and 137f; cf. S. Radt on Soph. *Meleagros* (TGrF IV, p. 345).

56. West, *Hesiodic Catalogue*, 47f.

57. Ovid *Met.* 8.314 (generic name) and 8.362f (Enaësimus); Hyg. *Fab.* 173 (three names, two of which are corrupt, in a catalogue of heroes ‘who went after the Calydonian boar’; for the transmitted text, which is ignored in H. J. Rose’s deplorable edition (2nd edn, Leiden, 1963), see P. Lehmann, *Abh. Bay. Ak. Wiss., Phil.-hist. Kl. N. F.* 23 (1944) 44).

58. Professor W. H. Willis has drawn my attention to an unpublished papyrus from the second century AD in the collection of Duke University (P. Robinson inv. 10), in which ‘[Lylkaïos and Eurymnos, sons of Hippokoon’ appear in a long list of heroic names which I take to be a catalogue of Calydonian hunters. Since Lykaithos and Eurytos (Alemán fr. 1.2–9 Page = 3 Calame; Apollod. 3.124) are among the earliest attested Hippokoontids, the two names in the Duke papyrus could qualify as secondary variants (see the examples of variant names quoted above). In fact Lykaithos’ name appears as Lykaïos in the scholia of the Louvre papyrus of Alemán fr. 1.2, and as Lykos in most of the MSS of Apollod. 3.124.

59. Diod. 4.33.5–6, Apollod. 2.143–5 and 3.125, Paus. 3.15.3–5; Calame, this volume, Ch. 8, section 2.9.1.

60. Alemán fr. 1.2–12 Page = 3 Calame (five names preserved and several more lost; cf. H. Diels, *Hermes*, 31 (1896) 342–5); Apollod. 3.124 (the longest list, with twelve names); Paus. 3.14.6–7 and 3.15.1 (a total of six names). At least two additional names can be found in Ovid and Hyginus (above, note 57), but the list of those Hippokoontids who participated in the Calydonian hunt need not have been identical with the more popular list of those slain by Herakles.

61. Thebros (= Sebros in Alcman’s dialect, whence Paus. 3.15.1–2) corresponds to Tebros (Apollod. 3.124), Lykaïos (Alemán) to Lykaithos (Apollod.), and Enarsphoros (Alemán) lies behind Emarsphoros (MS of Apollod.) and Enaraiphoros (MSS of Paus.). Genuine variant names include Arēios (Alemán) versus Arēitos (Pherecydes of Athens *ap. schol. Alemán*; add to *FGrH* 3 F 124–9).

62. P. Med. Inv. 123 (late second century AD), edited by S. Daris in D. H. Samuel (ed.), *Proceedings of the Twelfth International Congress of Papyrology* (Toronto, 1970) 97–102 (forty-seven names originally, arranged by males and bitches, as in Hyginus; followed by another catalogue of mythological monsters and of paradoxical phenomena in nature); Aesch. F 245 Radt (four names); Apollod. 3.32 (interpolated fragments of one or more lists in hexameters; cf. J. U. Powell, *Collectanea Alexandrina*, Oxford, 1925, 71–2); Ovid *Met.* 3.206ff; Hyg. *Fab.* 181 (two catalogues of more than eighty names); cf. P. Oxy. 30.2509 (the fate of Aktaion’s dogs after they killed their master). On the controversial attribution of the hexameters in Apollod. and in P. Oxy. 2509 to the Hesiodic *Catalogue*, see the different views of Renner, *HSCP*, 82 (1978), 283–5 (with full bibliography) and West, *Hesiodic Catalogue*, 88. The practice of recording the names of dogs associated with mythical events goes back to the archaic period. The François vase and several other archaic vases with scenes of the Calydonian hunt record the names of numerous dogs.

63. Henrichs, ‘Welckers Götterlehre’.

64. F. Graf, *Griechische Mythologie* (Munich and Zurich, 1985) 39–57; Burkert, *S&H*, 1–34; R. L. Gordon (ed.), *Myth, Religion and Society. Structuralist Essays by M. Detienne, L. Gernet, J.-P. Vernant and P. Vidal-Naquet* (Cambridge, 1981); L. Edmunds and A. Dundes, *Oedipus. A Folklore Casebook*, Garland Folklore Casebooks 4 (New York and London, 1984) 76–121 and 147–73.

65. The basis for all subsequent work on the Kallisto myth is R. Franz, *De Callistis fabula*, Leipzig Studien zur klassischen Philologie 12 (Leipzig, 1890) 235–365, who valiantly reconstructs the Hesiodic, Arcadian, Callimachean and Eratosthenic versions and discusses Ovid’s sources as well as his influence. Most of his reconstructions are vulnerable, but as a source collection Franz’s monograph is unrivalled. Cf. T. Condos, ‘The Katasterismoi of the Pseudo-Eratosthenes: A Mythological Commentary and English Translation’ (Diss., University of Southern California, Los Angeles, 1970; unpublished, *Diss. Abstr.* 31 (1971) 6029A) 10–14 and 43–9 (largely an uninspired summary of Franz); P. Borgeaud, *Recherches sur le dieu Pan* (Rome, 1979) 41–69, esp. 49–55 (a comprehensive treatment of the Kallisto myth which ignores the specific nature of the sources and their relationship).

66. Cf. J. Martin, *Histoire du texte des Phénomènes d’Aratos* (Paris, 1956) 36–68 for a thorough discussion of the catasterismographic tradition.

67. C. Robert, *Eratosthenis Catasterismorum reliquiae* (Berlin, 1978) 47–200 (parallel text of Catast. Epit.; schol. Arat.; schol. Germ.; an inferior version of the Arat. Lat. which Robert wrongly believed to be another version of schol. Germ. and which is of no interest; and *Astr.*); E. Maass, *Commentariorum in Aratum reliquiae* (Berlin, 1898) 175–306 (parallel text of Arat. Lat. (unknown to Robert) and Catast. Epit.), 334–555 (schol. Arat.), 573–81 (Catast. Exc. codex Venetus Marcianus gr. 444 misc., after A. Oliveri, *Pseudo-Eratosthenis Catasterismi, Mythographi Graeci* III 1, Leipzig, 1897). In the meantime, the

immediate ancestor of Ven. Marc. 444 has appeared (below, note 68); an augmented text of the schol. Arat. has been published by J. Martin, *Scholia in Aratum vetera*, Stuttgart, 1974 (users should be cautioned that Martin prints the *uncorrected* text of the MSS, which is informative but very misleading); and finally, a new edition of Hyginus' *Astr.* is now available (A. Le Boeuffe, *Hygin, L'Astronomie*, Paris, 1983) and yet another seems to be highly desirable (Le Boeuffe's text has a much smaller MS basis than that of Sister L. Fitzgerald, 'Hygini Astronomica' (Diss., St Louis University, 1967; unpublished, *Diss. Abstr.* 28 (1968) 3656A); cf. M. D. Reeve in L. D. Reynolds (ed.), *Texts and Transmission. A Survey of the Latin Classics* (Oxford, 1983) 187–9).

68. Catast. Exc. is known from codex Vaticanus gr. 1087 misc. (from which Ven. Marc. 444 was copied; see above, note 67), published by A. Rehm, *Eratosthenis Catasterismorum fragmenta Vaticana*, Programm des K. humanistischen Gymnasiums Ansbach für das Schuljahr 1898/99 (Ansbach, 1899), and from two other MSS (below, note 70).

69. Robert, *Eratosth.* 11–14.

70. Codd. Salmanticensis 233 (Q) and Scorialensis ϵ III 3 (S), published by Martin, *Scholia in Aratum vetera*, 74–5 (S) and 90 (Q). Amphis' name is mentioned only in Q, where the Amphis version appears out of order and by itself, i.e. without versions I and III. S gives the full entry, i.e. I–III, but omits Amphis' name. All of the catasteristic *historiai* in S and some of those in Q seem to derive from the unepitomised collection of constellation myths which is the ancestor of Catast. Exc, but Q and S contain catasterisms which are lacking in cod. Vat. gr. 1087 (above, note 68), including that of Ursa Major.

71. Cf. Robert, *Eratosth.*, 31–2 and 237–48, who argues for Eratosthenes as the source of this erudition.

72. The best discussions are by G. Knaack, *RE* 6.1 (1907) 377–81 and G. A. Keller, *Eratosthenes und die alexandrinische Sternichtung* (Diss., Zurich, 1946) 18–28. Keller believed, as did Wilamowitz, Robert, Rehm, Giirkoff and Solmsen before him, as well as Pfeiffer after him (*History*, 168), that the lost Greek original was the work of Eratosthenes. Neither the name of Eratosthenes nor the current title *Katasterismoi* has MS support, but there can be no doubt that Hyginus (whoever he was) used a collection of constellation myths that bore Eratosthenes' name (cf. Martin, *Histoire*, 95–125). Schol. D (A, b) II. 22.29 ascribes the story of Erigone's catasterism to Eratosthenes, presumably with his *Erigone* in mind (Keller). Even if the D-scholium (i.e. the Mythographus Homericus), like Hyginus, knew a collection of catasterisms ascribed to Eratosthenes, the ascription as such would hardly prove anything.

73. The extent of his knowledge is mirrored most accurately in the five representatives of Group A, viz. *Astr.*, *Arat.* *Lat.* and *schol.* *Germ.* on the Latin side, and *schol.* *Arat.* Q and S (above, note 70) on the Greek side.

74. By far the most methodological and compelling discussion of the relevant sources and their problems is W. Sale, 'The Story of Callisto in Hesiod', *Rhein. Mus.*, 105 (1962) 122–41, followed by the same author's 'Callisto and the Virginity of Artemis', *Rhein. Mus.*, 108(1965) 11–35.

75. Franz, *De Callistis fabula*, excluded the catasterism from his Hesiodic version; A. Rehm, *Mythographische Untersuchungen über griechische Sternsagen* (Diss. Munich, 1896) 36–41 assigned it emphatically to Hesiod; Robert, *Eratosth.*, 238f insisted that Kallisto's bear transformation was conceptually inseparable from the constellation of that name and that her catasterism was indeed Hesiodic; Sale, 'Story', 140 concluded strictly on methodological grounds that the myth as told in the Hesiodic *Astronomy* may or may not have ended with the catasterism. Franz's idea that Callimachus invented it is utterly unfounded. Callimachus mentions the Great Bear more than once and connects it with Kallisto (*Hymn* 1.41; Pfeiffer on fr. 632; *Suppl. Hell.* fr. 250.9f Lloyd-Jones/Parsons). Such casual references may explain why version V is attributed to Callimachus by the Mythographus Homericus (above, note 5), whose ascriptions must never be taken at face value.

76. K. O. Müller, *Prolegomena zu einer wis sense haftlichen Mythologie* (Göttingen, 1825) 73–6 and 193f; cf. the posthumous second edition of *Die Doria*, published as *Geschichten hellenischer Stämme und Städte*, II (Breslau, 1844) 376. Virtually all interpreters follow Müller and detach the catasterism from the myth proper.

77. On the Kallisto myth in Ovid see R. Heinze, 'Ovids elegische Erzählung' (1919), rep. in *Vom Geist des Römertums, Ausgewählte Aufsätze*, 3rd edn (Darmstadt, 1960) 308–403, esp. 385–8; B. Otis, *Ovid as an Epic Poet*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, 1970) 379–89.

78. Borgeaud, *Pan*, 50f as well as Burkert, *HN*, 86f and 91 make too much of the combined stories. In particular, the phrase 'Arkas married his mother unwittingly' (like Oedipus) in Catast. Exc. (above, note 68) is not remotely as significant as Burkert and, following him, Borgeaud (p. 55) suggest. The word 'married' is demonstrably a scribal interpolation, as the publication of S (above, note 70) has now confirmed. According to the original text of Catast., Arkas 'chased his mother' (*Astr.* and *Arat.* *Lat.*). On Lykaon see Buxton, this volume, [Ch. 4, section 2](#).

79. Sale, 'Story', 125–33, and 'Callisto and Artemis', 22–5.

80. West, *Hesiodic Catalogue*, 91–3.

81. S. Radt (*TGrF* III, p. 216) suggests that Aeschylus ‘may have followed Hesiod (fr. 163)’ in his tragedy *Kallisto*, the content of which is unknown except for two words (F 98). This is to explain *obscurum per obscurius*.

82. Kallisto’s seduction by Zeus posing as Artemis reappears in Apollod. 3.100, schol. Callim. *Hymn* 1.41 and Nonnus *Dion.* 2.122f, 33.289ff. Maass, *Commentariorum in Aratum reliquiae*, LXV f. argues that Nonnus, like Ovid, owed his knowledge of the Amphis version to the catasterismographic tradition. I doubt that the peculiar details of the Amphis version can be safely interpreted as a mythical reflection of initiation rites involving female homosexuality in the archaic period, a view expressed by Calame, *Choeurs* I, 432f and Borgeaud, *Pan*, 53f. Artemis’ own attachment to Kallisto would be a better clue to the existence of such practices than Zeus’ female disguise.

83. Franz, *De Callistas fabula*, 283–97, who rests his case for Callimachean authorship on the Mythographus Homericus (above, note 75) and on a local (Argive?) version of the Kallisto myth, reported by Callimachus’ pupil Istros (*FGrH* 334 F 75), which is similar to our versions V–VI.

84. Franz, *De Callistus fabula*, 343f; G. Maggiali, ‘Artemide-Callisto’, in *Mythos. Scripta in honorem M. Untersteiner* (Genoa, 1970) 179–85; G. Arrigoni, ‘Il maestro del maestro e i loro continuatori: mitologia e simbolismo animale in Karl Wilhelm Ferdinand Solger, Karl Otfried Müller e dopo’, *Ann. Sc. Nor. Sup. Pisa*, ser. III, vol. 14 (1984) 937–1019, at 1018 (in a discussion of the modern study of the Kallisto myth; cf. T. Gelzer, ‘Bachofen, Bern und der Bar’, in R. Fellmann, G. Germann and K. Zimmermann (eds), *Jagen und Sammeln. Festschrift für Hans-Georg Bandi* (Bern, 1985) 97–120). Tzetzes’ error was recognised by E. Scheer in his 1908 edition of schol. Lyc. *Alex.* 480 (= *FGrH* 262 F 12).

85. Kallisto’s transformation into a bear by Zeus (Apollod. 3.101) is also reported by Hyg. *Astr.* 2.1.4 and Liban. *Narr.* 12 (vol. 8, p. 41f Förster), both of whom provide details not found in Apollodorus. Their Greek sources cannot be determined.

86. The connection goes back to K. O. Müller (above, note 76), *Die Dorier* II 384–92, and *Prolegomena* 73f, who obliterated the very distinctions from which the Kallisto myth draws its meaning when he identified Artemis with both Kallisto and the bear, Artemis’ ‘sacred animal’ (an inadequate concept); cf. Arrigoni, ‘Il maestro’, 975–1019. On the Kallisto myth in relation to the *arkteia* see R. Arena, *Acme*, 32 (1979) 5–26; A. Henrichs, in J. Rudhardt and O. Reverdin (eds), *Le Sacrifice dans l’antiquité* (Vandoeuvres-Geneva, 1981) 198–208; J. -P. Vernant, *Annuaire du Collège de France*, 81 (1980–1) 398–400, and 83 (1982–3) 451–6; Borgeaud, *Pan* 53–5. On the *arkteia* see S. G. Cole, *ZPE*, 55 (1984) 238–44 (with full bibliography); L. Kahil, ‘Mythological Repertoire of Brauron’, in Moon (ed.), *Ancient Greek Art and Iconography*, 231–44; M. B. Hollinshead, *AJA*, 89 (1985) 419–40; E. C. Keuls, *The Reign of the Phallus* (New York, 1985) 310–20; S. G. Cole and G. Arrigoni in Arrigoni (ed.), *Le Donne in Grecia* (Rome and Bari, 1985) 19–25, 101–4, with pis. 17–18.

87. L. Kahil, *Antike Kunst*, 20(1977) 86–98, pi. 20; E. Simon, *Festivals of Attica. An Archaeological Commentary* (Madison, Wisconsin, 1983) 87f, pi. 25; Arrigoni, *Le Donne*, 21, pi. II.

88. West, *Hesiodic Catalogue*, 92 (Kallisto ‘was killed in the story’).

89. Sale, ‘Callisto and Artemis’, 29 (who tries, throughout his article, to separate the bear transformation from the shooting); A. Adler, *RE* 10.2 (1919) 1727 and 1729.

90. Franz, *De Callistus fabula*, 273–83, followed by Sale, ‘Callisto and Artemis’, 14f. The phrase ‘(Artemis) killed Kallisto’ (*Certamen Homeri et Hesiodi* 118 Allen, written in the fifth century BC) does not imply, as both Franz and Sale think, that Kallisto was shot in human form. She retains her human name even after her bear transformation, as in Paus. 8.3.6f and Apollod. 3.101.

91. Cf. A. B. Cook, *Zeus. A Study in Ancient Religion*, II (Cambridge, 1925) 228 n 5, who reproduces both coin types (p. 229, figs 158–9).

92. For the four vases as well as the coins, see *LIMC* II 1 (1984) ‘Artemis’ nos. 1385–90 (L. Kahil), ‘Arkas’ nos. 1–5 (A. D. Trendall), and Arrigoni, ‘Il maestro’, 1016ff, where references to illustrations can be found.

93. A vase by the Niobid painter (c. 460 BC; *ARV* 604.51; E. Löwy, *Jdl*, 47 (1932) 64, fig. 15), which shows Artemis taking aim at a woman carrying a baby and trying to escape, has been tentatively connected with the Kallisto myth by R. M. Cook, *Niobe and Her Children* (Cambridge, 1964) 13f. If interpreted correctly, this vase would be the earliest example of the dissociation of Kallisto’s death from her animal transformation.

94. Boston MFA 10.185 = *LIMC* I 1 (1981) ‘Aktaion’ no. 15 (L. Guimond). The transformation of Aktaion is usually very graphic in representations from all periods, as Guimond’s catalogue shows. See above, notes 25 and 62.

95. Burkert, *HN*, 12–34 and, on Aktaion, 111–14.

96. *Catast.* 32, pp. 162–7 Robert (above, note 67). But Hippe/Hippo, daughter of Cheiron, was

transformed into a mare to save her from disgrace after she had been raped by Aiolos (other explanations for her animal transformation were given by Euripides and Callimachus); the catasterism followed the birth of her child Melanippe (*Catast.* 18).

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Greek Mythology: A Select Bibliography (1965–1989)

Jan Bremmer

What follows is a personal sampling of the vast literature on Greek mythology. I start about the middle of the 1960s when the new approaches of structuralism and functionalism began to supersede the ruling fertility paradigm as developed by Mannhardt and Frazer, although some older and still valuable studies have not been omitted. What has been included here is designed to give access to the best or most inspiring recent studies; those interested in more complete listings should consult *L'Année philologique*.

1. Introductions, Handbooks, General Surveys, Bibliography

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